DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 283 969 CE 047 633

AUTHOR Laverty, J. R.
TITLE A Report on Some Continuing Education and Independent Study Programmes in North America. Working Papers in Distance Education No. 8.
INSTITUTION Queensland Univ., Brisbane (Australia). Div. of External Studies.
PUB DATE [84]
NOTE 101p.
AVAILABLE FROM Division of External Studies, University of Queensland, St. Lucia, Queensland, 4067 Australia ($3.00).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Admission Criteria; Adult Education; Auditing (Coursework); College Credits; *Continuing Education; Continuing Education Units; *Curriculum Development; *Distance Education; Feasibility Studies; Fees; Foreign Countries; Graduation Requirements; *Independent Study; Postsecondary Education; *Program Content; Program Development; *Student Certification
IDENTIFIERS *North America; University of Queensland (Australia)

ABSTRACT

The structure and content of continuing education and independent study programs currently being offered in North America (particularly in the United States) were examined from the standpoint of the feasibility of adopting similar practices and developing similar programs at the University of Queensland in Australia. It was discovered that there are currently more than 3,000 universities and colleges with accredited degree programs in the United States alone, with most of them also offering extension or continuing education courses. These courses may be grouped into the following categories: college-level credit courses, noncredit courses of university quality, college-level courses that can be taken either on a for-credit or noncredit basis, and high school credit courses. Policies governing credit courses, courses taken for no credit, and courses audited as well as the fees charged for them and the remuneration of faculty and departments offering such courses varied widely from school to school. Differences between individual universities' practices regarding the development, content, and role of independent study courses were also examined. The authors of the study developed 27 recommendations concerning the development of new programs and revision of existing continuing education and independent study programs at the University of Queensland. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED283969

Working Papers

in

DISTANCE EDUCATION

NO. 8

A REPORT ON SOME CONTINUING EDUCATION AND INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAMMES IN NORTH AMERICA

J. R. Laverty

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J R Laverty

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

WORKING PAPERS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

The Division of External Studies, University of Queensland issues a series of occasional papers in Distance Education to allow for the timely dissemination of research into Distance Education.

The purpose of the Working Paper Series is to bring to the attention of research workers in Distance Education the outcome of research in this field, especially substantial empirical studies in Distance Education, more quickly than the professional journals (which are now subject to considerable publication delay).

For further enquiries about the series contact:

The Director,
Division of External Studies,
University of Queensland,
ST. LUCIA. Q. 4067
AUSTRALIA.

ISSN 0725-0223

PREVIOUS ISSUES

No. 1 : Evaluation of a Third Year Distance Education Course: Monetary Economics

by *J.D. Stanford* and *B.W. Imrie*

No. 2 : Application of 'Principles' of Adult Development and Learning to Distance Education

by *B.T. O'Rourke*

No. 3 : A Survey of the Counselling needs of External Students at the University of Queensland. 1980.

by *H.W. Thiele*

No. 4 : Video as Supplementary Material. The Impact of an Alternative Development of Study Materials in Solving Formal Economic Problems.

by *W. Laaser* in collaboration with *J. Bartels, H. Klein, F.J. Mattes, U. Rossié.*

No. 5 : Charlatans, Knowledge, Curriculum and Phenomenological Research

by *Donald Vandenberg*

No. 6 : The 'Discipline' of English in the Eighties

by *C. Castan, K.G. Hamilton, Dan O'Neill* and *M. Hollington*

No. 7 : The First Twenty Years of the Maryborough & District University Society 1963-1983

by *F.T. Borchardt*

WORKING PAPERS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

The Division of External Studies, University of Queensland issues a series of occasional papers in Distance Education to allow for the timely dissemination of research into Distance Education.

The purpose of the Working Paper series is to bring to the attention of research workers in Distance Education the outcome of research in this field, especially substantial empirical studies in Distance Education, more quickly than the professional journals (which are now subject to considerable publication delay).

For further enquiries about the series contact:

The Director,
Division of External Studies,
University of Queensland,
ST. LUCIA. Q. 4067.
AUSTRALIA.

ISSN 0725-0223

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this survey is to set out in a reasonably readable and logically organized way information gathered during visits to a selected number of universities with continuing education and/or independent study programmes in North America. However, it seemed desirable to set this information and the associated personal observations in a broader context by providing a general overview of independent study in North America.

AN OVERVIEW

Some Aspects of the United States Higher Education System

During an investigation of off-campus teaching in post-secondary school institutions in the United States during 1975 six significant aspects of university extension and external degree studies appeared to me to be worth noting, namely:

1. The award of degrees by non-teaching institutions or colleges on the basis of examinations prepared for that purpose.
2. The allocation of degree credit through the assessment of experiental learning.
3. The use of external degree courses prepared by an outside institution, e.g., the Open University.
4. The development of courses 'tailored' to the needs of individual students.
5. The evolution of large university extension programmes which sometimes included an independent study unit.
6. The extension of the role of community colleges into the field of adult education.

Examples of the first of these approaches examined in 1975 included the programmes of the Regents of the State University of New York and Thomas A. Edison College at Trenton in New Jersey. Under the direction of the Regents of the State

University of New York the College Entrance Examinations Board of New York and the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey, had developed College Entrance Examinations Board Advanced Placement Examinations (A.P.), College Proficiency Examination Program (CPEP), Regents' External Degree Examinations (R.E.D.E.) and College-Level Examinations Program (C.L.E.P.). In 1975 it was possible to complete Associate Degrees in Arts, Science, Applied Science (Nursing) and Nursing and a Bachelor Degree in Science (Business Administration), Science and Arts through such examinations. Thomas A. Edison College was a part of the New Jersey system of colleges and universities and was devoted entirely to offering external degrees by examination. It offered Associate Degrees in Arts, Management and Radiologic Technology and the Bachelor Degrees in Arts and Science (Business Administration). In neither of these cases was any teaching provided, though course descriptions and requirements and examination information was given, together with study guides and reading lists. However, independent study materials were usually available from proprietary schools. Credit towards a degree was granted for courses completed by accredited colleges or universities and for assessed learning of a non-traditional kind.

As early as 1975 credit towards degrees was already being given for assessed non-traditional or experiental learning and much attention was being given to ways of assessing learning of these kinds through such avenues as the "Co-operative Assessment of Experiental Learning Project". Indeed, the New York Education Commissioner's third annual conference at Syracuse was devoted to "The Assessment of Life and Work Experience". Moreover, the assessment of experiental learning was an important and time-consuming part of the establishment of a portfolio of prior learning by each new student negotiating a degree course with his mentor at Empire State College in New York State.

External degree programmes or courses developed by other institutions, especially by the Open University, had been adopted by a number of institutions in order to reduce the establishment costs of independent study programmes. For example, Rutgers University at New Brunswick, New Jersey, was experimenting with the use of Open University materials, while the California State University and Colleges system had set up an External Degree Commission to develop programmes for use by individual member colleges and universities and arrangements were in hand for campuses to use external degree courses developed by sister campuses. Since 1975 a Consortium has been established to provide a system-wide unit to encourage and facilitate the use of external degree courses.

Because of the high cost of 'tailor-made' undergraduate courses this approach to external degrees was not widespread. In 1975 the leading exponent of the method was Empire State College in New York State. Each student in consultation with his mentor designed his own degree programme using resources available in the college, at other institutions and in the community, beginning with the formation of a portfolio of prior learning or 'advanced standing'. Once this programme had been approved by the dean of the appropriate faculty it was divided into learning contracts which the student had then to complete with the help of his mentor as advisor, instructor and evaluator. The Union Graduate School at Yellow Springs offered a Ph.D. programme based on similar principles, but differing substantially in its *modus operandi*.

The university extension and independent study/external degree programmes investigated in 1975, with the exception of Syracuse University, were at the multi-campus institutions of Pennsylvania State University, the University of Wisconsin and the California State University and Colleges. At Syracuse, Pennsylvania State and Wisconsin universities the independent study programme was a relatively minor part of a larger college or division which was responsible for all extension services including evening courses, credit and non-credit courses and more general continuing

educational activities such as conferences. Generally, it was not possible to complete a degree by independent study. A period of "residence" on the campus was usually required at some time during the degree programme.

Finally, it was clear from my visit to San Mateo Community College that an important aspect of the operation of these institutions was the community outreach which could be achieved by adult education programmes geared to community needs both at sub-tertiary and tertiary levels. They were thus obviously competing with traditional universities and colleges in this area of education.

Some Observations on the Contemporary Scene

There are more than 3,000 universities and colleges with accredited degree programmes in the united States alone. The majority of these also offer extension or continuing education courses of various kinds. Quite often these consist of evening classes at the university or at various locations around the city in which the university is located. Sometimes staff of the university, or qualified people especially recruited for the purpose, teach extension courses at centres located throughout the State or the educational area served by the university, e.g., Pennsylvania State University. In Wisconsin, such groups are taught through an educational telephone network and/or a radio network with the help of supplementary reading materials. Not infrequently independent study methods are adopted to instruct students unable to attend the university. Of course radio and television are sometimes used for continuing education and university extension purposes and occasionally newspapers are employed to distribute teaching materials to actual or potential students.

Although many courses offered by continuing education and university extension units cannot be used to gain credit in regular degree programmes some 'credit' courses are usually offered. However, these are often regarded as a means of speeding-up progress through a degree programme or as a way of making good a

failure in a regular class and not as an alternative means of achieving a degree. In some instances `college' credit courses are made available to bright high school students so that they can more quickly complete a degree programme when they enter college because they have "advanced standing" - an important concession in view of the high cost of `college' education in many states. At some universities a substantial number of `credit' courses are accredited high school subjects which are offered to high school students or to adults seeking an high school award. A substantial part of the market for courses at this level also arises from a desire to accelerate progress through high school or to catch-up ground lost due to failure, illness, etc. Both credit and non-credit courses are available at a number of universities through independent study.

Only a minority of universities with extension and/or continuing education programmes offer courses by independent study. Seventy-two of these are members of the National University Continuing Education Association and have their programmes listed in Peterson's, *The Independent Study Catalog*,[1] including two from Canada, namely, Athaleasca University and Memorial University of Newfoundland. There are, of course, other universities and numerous colleges with independent study commitments of various kinds which are not featured in the catalog, but perhaps those that are may be taken as reasonably typical of the North American scene.

In A Research Report of the NUCEA on independent study in 1982 Dr. Harold Markowitz has analysed the independent study programmes of these 72 institutions.[2] Total enrolments for the year 1981-82 amounted to 240,488 and ranged for individual institutions between 10 and 17,552 students with an average mean enrolment of

[1] Joan H. Hunter (ed.) The Independent Study Catalog: NUCEA's Guide to Independent Study Through Correspondence Instruction 1983-1985. (Washington, National University Continuing Education Ass., 1983).

[2] Independent Study in 1982: National University Continuing Education Association Independent Study Program. A Research Report of the NUCEA Independent Study Division by Harold Markowitz, Jr., Ed.D., Chairman, Research and Evaluation Committee, Final Report, January 1983. The following summary of independent study programmes is based on Markowitz's paper.

3,340. This was an overall decline in enrolments of 1.56 per cent on the 1980-81 figure. While 48 per cent of all institutions lost enrolments, the losses occurred predominantly in those with enrolments of 2,500 or less. Programmes differed in nature as well as in size. For example, about 75 per cent of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's 14,000 students were taking high school courses. By contrast about 25 per cent of the University of Iowa's 4,000 students were studying for post-baccalaureate credit and nearly all of the University of Maryland's 2,624 students were enrolled for courses carrying nine hours credit as compared to the more usual three or six hours credit.

All 72 institutions with the exception of Purdue University and North Dakota Division of Independent Study offered independent study college level courses. Purdue University concentrated on non-credit courses, while North Dakota Division of Independent Study confined its activities to high school courses. There were a total of 143,819 college enrolments in 1981-82. The average enrolment was 2,055. Thus 59.7 per cent of all independent study enrolments were college students. Institutional enrolments ranged from 10 at East Tennessee State University to 12,577 at Brigham Young University which had a 'captive' world-wide clientele in the Church of Latter Day Saints. Other universities with large enrolments include University of Wisconsin-Extension (5,277), Pennsylvania State University (6,029), the University of Minnesota (7,845) and Indiana University (8,373).

Thirty-three of the 72 institutions (42%) offered high school courses by independent study. High school enrolments totalled 72,710 in 1981-82, about half the number of college enrolments. Institutional high school enrolments ranged from 24 to 10,771 with Nebraska-Lincoln, Missouri and Texas Tech. universities topping the list with 10,771, 10,629 and 9,359 enrolments, respectively. Thirty-five institutions offered non-credit courses by independent study. These attracted 23,959 enrolments in 1981-82. Thus about one in ten independent study students was

enrolled in a non-credit course. Institutional enrolments in such courses ranged between 13 and 6,400. With an enrolment of 6,400 Pennsylvania State University had twice as many non-credit students as its nearest rival, California State University, Sacramento, which had 3,127 non-credit students.

Since in nearly all cases course development was done by academics, or other suitably qualified people, under contract on an overload basis, few full-time professional staff were employed in the independent study units and in a few instances the administrative work was done by faculty on an overload basis. Altogether 519 persons administered the programmes for 240,488 students which represents a ratio of 1,463. The number of administrative personnel in institutions ranged from 0 to 12.7. The average figure was 2.4. Similarly the number of clerical staff ranged between 0 and 17, with an average of 4.9 for each unit. Markowitz points out that there is a high correlation between the size of staff and the number of enrolments, which is as might be expected. He estimates that a graduated ratio would be:

Enrolments	Staff
1,000	4
3,340	7-8[3]
5,000	9.5
10,000	16.5

He concludes that "economies of scale obviously apply in independent study".[4]

As already indicated course development is usually done under contract. Stipends are based on a flat rate per course, or on a set amount per credit hour. The average cost of developing a college level course was about $570.00 in 1981-82 and $607.00 in 1982-83, representing an annual rate of increase of 6.5 per cent. High

[3] An average institution.
[4] Markowitz, op. cit., p.6.

school courses came more cheaply at $368.00 in 1981-82 and $391.00 in 1982-83, an increase of 6 per cent. Thus the unit course development costs for high school courses were $201.00 and $216.00 below those of college courses in 1981-82 and 1982-83, respectively. Interestingly, the mean cost of preparing non-credit courses for 22 of the 35 institutions involved was $630.00 in 1981-82, though the range was wide - $100 to $1,500. The college level courses, in particular, were almost wholly prepared by regular faculty on an overload basis which may account for the relatively low cost.

Over half the universities paid college level instructors for assignment grading at a piecetime rate per lesson. Others paid an amount based on the credit hour rating of the course, or per enrolment. A popular variation was to pay a set sum calculated on the credit hour rating of the course divided by the number of lessons. The average rate of remuneration for each graded lesson was $2.45 in 1981-82 (37 universities) and $2.60 in 1982-83 (35 universities). The increase in average cost was 7 per cent. Thirteen institutions had introduced payment scales which provided monetary incentives for prompt grading. The average payment for grading a high school lesson in 1981-82 was $1.86 and in 1982-83 $1.96, or 59c and 64c less per lesson than for college assignments. By contrast the average cost of grading a non-credit lesson was $2.38 in 1981-82 and $2.53 in 1982-83. Prompt grading remuneration scales had been introduced by some institutions for both high school and non-credit courses in order to encourage the prompt grading of lessons.

Computer grading of lessons was practiced by ten institutions for college level courses and by two institutions in the case of both high school and non-credit courses. The main advantage advanced for computer grading was reduction of costs. For example, Pennsylvania State University reported 83 per cent savings in lesson grading costs as a consequence of the introduction of computer grading. The University of Missouri was the leading exponent of computer grading at the high school level and

had the second highest enrolment (10,629). Markowitz commented that the "use of computers to grade non-credit courses would seem to be an excellent application, since concerns of faculty role and appropriate preparation in a discipline do not apply".[5] He suggests that non-credit courses are often "examination-free versions of credit-bearing courses" and predicts, "As more courses develop in the predicted direction of credit-free lifelong learning, computers could play an increasing role".[6] The fact that the universities with the largest non-credit enrolments - Pennsylvania State with 6,400 and California State University, Sacramento with 3,127 - employ computer grading is, perhaps, indicative of the accuracy of the prediction.

Fees charged may be divided into tuition fees and fees for special services. The mean independent study college fee was $31.94 per semester hour for 56 universities and $24.28 per quarter hour for 13 universities. The fee level rose by about 9.3 per cent in 1982-83 to $34.95 per semester hour and $26.75 per quarter hour, respectively. However, there were many variations in fee structures based on different charges for lower and upper division courses, or on fees graduated in accordance with the credit hour rating of courses. The standard average high school tuition fee was $36.82 per half unit, while non-credit course tuition fees were too diverse to allow generalizations.

Special service fees included the cost of study guides, the transfer of registration from one course to another, the extension of the permissable time to complete a course and the mailing of books and lessons. Such costs were met in a number of ways. Over 60 per cent of institutions charged a fee varying between $2.00 and $20.00 (average $7.75) for study guides used in their courses. Three quarters of all institutions charged "rounded" fees of $5.00, $10.00 or $15.00 (mean charge $9.14) for transferring enrolment from one course to another which suggested to Markowitz

[5] Ibid., p.19.
[6] Ibid., p.20.

that the fee was designed to reduce "whimsical" transfers rather than to cover the costs of transfer.[7] Similarly, the charge for extending the permissable time to complete the course was usually rounded out to a fee ranging from $5.00 to $10.00 (mean $8.88). Eighty-five per cent of all institutions levied this type of fee. One in ten universities charged an out-of-state fee for non-resident students. On the other hand two-thirds charged for mailing textbooks. Other institutions included mailing costs in the general administration fee. Only 25 per cent of institutions charged a fee for mailing lessons, though it was more common to charge for an oversea airmail service. Since university extension and continuing education are not subsidized by governments, these units, including independent study programs must be self-supporting. In many cases they earn "profits" for the institution.

Markowitz provides a profile of an average independent study program which is worth noting.

A Typical Independent Study Program

> A program that is average in every way is located at a Midwestern university: there were 3,340 new enrollments in 1981-82. Of these, 2,055 were in college courses, the rest in high school and a small noncredit program. Overall, the program enrolled 50 fewer students in 1981-82 than it did in 1980-81. The department has a full time staff of seven and one-half persons - two full-time and one half-time professionals and a clerical staff equivalent to five persons (some clerical workers are shared with another department). All faculty teach on an overload basis.
>
> To offset costs the department charges students $10.00 to transfer between courses and $5.00 to extend an enrollment. The bookstore also charges to mail books. No additional charges are made for providing study guides, permitting non-residents to enroll, or mailing lessons.
>
> In 1981-82 college students paid $32.00 per semester hour to register and high school students paid $37.00 per half unit. Fees varied in the noncredit courses. In 1982-83 the college tuition went to $35.00 per semester hour (up 9.4%) and the high school tuition was raised to $39.00 per half unit (up 5.4%).

[7] Ibid.

College faculty are paid more than others: $570.00 to develop a course and $2.45 a lesson to grade it; in 1982-83 this went to $600.00 and $2.60, increases of 5 and 6%. High school faculty are paid $370.00 to develop a course and $1.85 a lesson to grade; this was raised by 5% to $390.00 and $1.95 in 1982-83. Noncredit course development compensation is negotiated. Noncredit instructors were paid $2.40 per lesson for grading in 1981-82, and were given a 6% raise to $2.55 in 1982-83. Pay is the same for prompt graders and slow ones, professors and instructors. There is no application of computer grading in any of the courses.[8]

Summarizing admission requirements *The Independent Study Catalog* reports: "In general, correspondence study courses listed in this guide are open to all individuals, regardless of age or previous educational experience. Applications are usually accepted without entrance examinations or proof of prior educational experience". The time requirements set broad limits and are generally flexible. Courses are not tied to the academic year so that students can enrol at their convenience and work at their own pace. However, a twelve month time limit is normally set for the completion of a course, though most institutions allow extensions of time, often, as we have seen, at a fee. To ensure the validity of the "learning experience" and to give instructors time to respond to students work before the examination, some institutions have rules to prevent a too rapid completion of courses.

The courses offered by the 72 institutions listed cover the following broad fields of study:

Agriculture and Renewable Natural Resources

Architecture and Environmental Design

Arts, Visual and Performing

Business

Communication

Computer Science and Data Processing

[8] Ibid., p.22.

Education

Engineering and Engineering Technology

Health Care and Health Sciences

Home Economics

Industrial Arts, Trades, and Technology

Language, Linguistics, and Literature

Law

Libraries and Museums

Life Sciences and Physical Sciences

Mathematical Sciences

Military Sciences

Philosophy, Religion, and Theology

Physical Education, Health Education, and Leisure

Psychology

Public Administration and Social Services

Social Sciences and Social Studies.

The Guide also succinctly summarizes the methods and procedures of distance education followed by these institutions:

The Mechanics of Correspondence Study

While each institution has somewhat different policies and procedures, correspondence study generally follows the pattern outlined below.

1. **Study Materials.** A study guide that includes a list of required textbooks and materials, supplementary information, specific learning assignments, and all other details necessary for successful completion of the course is sent to a student as soon as the enrollment process is complete. (Details of the enrollment procedures are contained in the institutional catalog.)

2. **Textbooks.** The required textbooks and other course materials may be obtained in a number of ways, depending upon the procedures of the particular institution. They are either ordered at the time of enrollment and sent at the same time as the study guide, ordered from a designated bookstore after the receipt of the study guide, or obtained from local sources. Audiovisual aids, if any, are usually sent with the study guide, and charges for these are indicated in the catalogs of the individual institutions.

3 **Study Assignments.** The study guide divides the course into segments, usually called "lessons" or "assignments". Each lesson directs certain study activities, such as readings, self-check exercises, occasional field trips, interviews, and any other activities that are appropriate to the subject area of the course. These are done in preparation for the successful completion of the next step.

4 **Assignments for Evaluation.** After the study activities in each lesson are completed, a written assignment is submitted for evaluation. This varies widely from course to course, and sometimes even within the same course. A written assignment may consist of prescribed objective or essay questions, a report, a paper, or any other example of written work. In some instances, the student has the opportunity to submit a cassette, answering questions or performing orally.

These assignments are evaluated and returned as soon as possible. The instructor expresses a judgment of the quality of the assignment, most often with descriptive comments and a grade.

5. **Examinations.** Credit courses usually require one or two examinations that must be taken under the supervision of an authorized proctor. Generally, students are able to arrange for supervision of the examination at an institution near their home. In some cases, noncredit courses also require final examinations. Examination forms are sent directly to the proctor, and the completed examination is returned to the institution by the proctor after it has been administered to the student. Specific details are given in the catalog or the study guide of the enrolling institution.

6. **Records and Transcripts.** A record of a completed correspondence course is maintained by each institution. For credit courses, the student's grade is recorded, and transcripts of the credit earned may be requested from the institution. Generally, a small charge is assessed for each transcript. For noncredit and certificate courses, some institutions award a certificate of completion or Continuing Education Units (CEUs).[9]

DETAILED INSTITUTIONAL STUDIES

During my period of study and long service leave in North America I visited twelve universities which had continuing education programmes, independent study programmes, or both. These institutions were visited in the following order:

---

[9] The Independent Study Catalog, op. cit., pp.2-3.

Date	Institution
9. 3. 83	University Extension. University of California. Berkeley
27. 4. 83	College of Liberal Studies. University of Oklahoma
18. 5. 83	Division of Continuing Education. University of Florida. Gainesville
27. 5. 83	Department of Independent Study by Correspondence. Pennsylvania State University
15. 6. 83	Independent Study Degree Programs. University College. Syracuse University
14. 7. 83	Metropolitan College. Boston University
9. 9. 83	Athabasca University. Edmonton. Canada
10. 10. 83	Department of Independent Study. University of Minnesota
14. 10. 83	Department of Independent Study. University of Wisconsin - Extension
17. 10. 83	Independent Study Division of Continuing Education Studies. University of Nebraska-Lincoln
25. 10. 83	Correspondence Study Division of Continuing Education. University of Utah
23. 11. 83	Office of Extended Learning Programs. California State University. Sacramento

This selection represents a reasonable cross-section of institutions involved in continuing education and independent study in North America. It includes institutions with some of the largest enrolments in college level, high school and non-credit courses, but focusses on those with independent study programmes. The only exception is Boston University whose continuing education is of a more traditional kind. Athabasca is the only Canadian university included. It is exceptional in that it is solely a distance education institution on the Open University model.

University Extension, University of California, Berkeley

The University of California has a very large university extension programme associated with eight of the nine campuses which is under the direction of the Dean of University Extension Programs. It includes evening classes, one-day conferences, weekend programmes, field trips, lecture series and international study programmes. Apart from this extensive programme the Independent Study Section of University Extension at Berkeley offers a relatively large number of credit, high school and non-credit courses. Independent Study enrolments in 1981-82 totalled 7,997-3,937 college level, 1,897 high school level and 2,161 non-credit students. The 250 courses offered in 1982-83 covered the following wide and diverse fields: American Studies, Anthropology, Art, Astronomy, Biochemistry, Biological Sciences, Business Management, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, Education, Engineering, English, Geology, History, Languages, Mathematics, Music, Nutritional Sciences, Pest Management, Philosophy, Physical Education and Recreation, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Public Health, Radiologic Technology, Real Estate, Sociology, Statistics, Women's Studies and Waiting.

Each course is based on a textbook or textbooks. The syllabus is set out in a study guide which normally contains study advice, assignment (lesson) information and advice on supplementary reading material. Some courses also include one or more audio cassette recordings, e.g., languages courses. Assignments, or lessons, are an integral part of the teaching/learning programme. After review and evaluation by the instructor they are returned to the student for reconsideration and guidance. The number required varies greatly according to the nature of the course (30 are required for one French course) and generally increase in length as the number to be submitted declines. In credit courses students are required to sit supervised final examinations in addition to completing all assignments. Students not wishing to earn credit need not take the final examinations. A course grade is not assigned in non- credit courses but

"non-credit" students may secure a letter stating that the course has been satisfactorily completed apart from the examination. The courses are developed by instructors drawn from Univeristy of California faculty, faculty of other institutions, and specialists in business and professional areas.

There is no entry requirement for enrolment in University Extension, but enrolment does not constitute entry to the University of California. Students may enrol at their own convenience and can study at their own pace. However, the normal time allocated for the completion of a course is 12 months unless a dean specifies otherwise. One six month's extension may be granted for a fee of $20.00. Tuition fees for courses vary considerably according to the nature of the course and the number of assignments required. The cheapest course in 1982-83 was $85.00 and the dearest $285.00. Most fell within the range of $120.00 to $135.00. The fee for transferring from one course to another is $20.00. Postage was charged only to students residing outside of continental United States. Provision was made for the sale of course materials to others than students at prices ranging between $15.00 and $75.00.

The low regard in which continuing education and independent studies are held by the traditional faculty is borne out by the credit arrangements for the courses offered by University Extension. Although credit towards a degree programme can be earned through independent study and other extension courses, degree programmes are not available by this mode. Indeed, University of California students must secure written approval from the dean of their school or college prior to enrolling for credit in an Independent Study course and University Extension courses are not accepted as part of the residence requirements of the University. These must be fulfilled after admission to the Unversity. Fifty-seven approved undergraduate credit courses at both the lower and upper levels were offered by independent study in 1982-83 and a greater number of Extension credit courses could be used for credit towards a degree programme with the approval of the dean of individual schools or colleges. Clearly the main purposes

of these offerings were to provide prospective students of the university or other higher educational institutions with an opportunity to accumulate "advanced standing" towards a degree before admission, to provide opportunities for current students to accelerate their progress through a degree programme or to make good failures or delays due to illness, etc., and to enable graduate students to meet prerequisites for graduate programmes and for postgraduate professional requirements.

Both credit and non-credit courses offered by University Extension can be used to meet the licensing and continuing education requirements of professional bodies and a range of these are offered by independent study. For example, the licensing requirements for Californian Real Estate Agents, Radiologic Technologists, Teachers and Structural Pest Controllers and the continuing education requirements for Public Accountants, Professional Engineers and Nursing Administrators can be met in this way. Moreover, University Extension certificates in Business, Industrial Relations and Professional Designation in Business and Management studies, which were developed in co-operation with the schools and colleges of the University and the specialized institutes and professional associations, have earned wide professional acceptance.

The high school correspondence courses offered by University Extension are designed primarily for students in regular attendance at high school, but may also be taken by arrangement by students working independently. The credits earned can be used towards high school graduation with the approval of the high school principal, or, alternatively, to fulfil requirements for entrance to a university or college on the approval of the admissions officer of the institution. Here again the emphasis is on speeding-up progress through high school or making good failures and delays.

Despite the obvious success of the extension programme both in monetary and academic terms, it was clear from the remarks of Dr. Donald McDaniel, Deputy Director of Extension, that the regular faculty tended to regard continuing education and independent study as "inferior" university activities. They might be an essential

service the University must provide for the community, but they were not its "real" work. The marginal credit recognition given to extension courses in the regular degree programmes and the gradual usurpation of Extension's own building by more traditional elements of the University are indicative of these attitudes.

The College of Liberal Studies, University of Oklahoma

The desire of faculty of the University of Oklahoma to develop quality college programmes for adult students led to the establishment of the College of Continuing Education in 1961 and to the introduction of the innovative, cross-disciplinary Bachelor of Liberal Studies Degree designed specifically for adults. Following its success the Master of Liberal Studies Degree was developed in 1967. Three years later the College of Continuing Education was renamed the College of Liberal Studies and in 1973 the Bachelor of Liberal Studies/Upper Division was developed for junior and community college students and for students who had completed sixty or more college hours. Although originally established to cater for adult students the college has extended its activities to include liberal studies offerings for the on-campus student. However, the liberal studies programmes are basically the University of Oklahoma's response to the need of adults for a "broader, liberal education which would relate to their personal and career pursuits". [10]

The objectives of the Bachelor of Liberal Studies Program are designated as:

1. Better understanding of one's own personality and potential:

2. Knowledge of one's own and of other contemporary cultures:

[10] Form letter from William A. Maehl Jr., Dean, College of Liberal Studies, University of Oklahoma.

3. A historical view of human development - social, intellectual, scientific, artistic, and philosophical;

4. Increased appreciation for some of the greatest literary, scientific, and artistic works;

5. Ability to read, interpret, and evaluate the works of scholars, and to understand the methods of investigation within the broad areas of humanities, natural sciences and social sciences;

6. Knowledge of the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences in sufficient depth and breadth to enable one to understand relationships among these broad areas of knowledge; and

7. Better understanding of the problems of humanity in the twentieth century and of the probable direction and effect of change. [11]

The advantages of the programme are claimed to be the freedom to study when and where the student finds it convenient, individually assigned tutorial advisors to assist with problems and questions, self-paced progress and the opportunity to build on prior learning and experience while acquiring new knowledge and perceptions. [12]

The linear programme consists of core studies in Humanities, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences organized along thematic lines; individually planned contract studies developed by the student in association with his faculty adviser and a final inter-area and inter-disciplinary study. The B. L. S. is designed primarily, as already indicated, for adult students with varying educational needs and interests and with career, family and community responsibilities. The programme uses a combination of guided independent study based on a faculty-student tutorial relationship and short-

[11] The University of Oklahoma College of Liberal Studies Bulletin 1983, p.2.
[12] Ibid.

term intensive seminars on the University of Oklahoma campus to achieve its goals. A student does not complete unit courses, but rather undertakes a stepped programme of independent study and seminars.

The core studies normally require a year's work in each of the three areas - Humanities, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences. The humanities include the fine arts, cultural history, literature and philosophy. The natural sciences include astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, physical geography, and physics. The social sciences include anthropology, economics, history, geography, political science, psychology and sociology. Core study is organized thematically so that it leads up to an understanding of the major issues and problems of the area. It consists of a defined and carefully chosen list of approximately twelve to fifteen books which the student studies with the guidance of the faculty advisor. Each core study is associated with a learning contract developed by the student with the advice and approval of the faculty which identifies study goals in greater detail and depth than the core study. Contract learning is very flexible. It may be quite specialized in content or extend the concepts involved in the core study and can include learning options, such as directed readings, internships, course work from the University of Oklahoma or another institution and other activities such as travel, work-related projects, or community service. When his faculty adviser considers a student is adequately prepared he takes a comprehensive area examination (usually two papers) involving both objective and essay questions. When a student has completed, or nearly completed, an area of study, he/she attends a seminar covering three weeks on that area directed by a two-member faculty team.

Following completion of the three core area studies students enrol in an inter-area independent study programme which is designed to emphasize the contributions which these studies make to an understanding, if not to a solution, of particular problems and questions. It is based on the study of assigned titles with an

interdisciplinary theme which explore the relationships and consider the problems from the viewpoint of several disciplines and on supplementary reading selected by the student in consultation with his academic adviser and approved by college faculty. After completion of this work students take an inter-area examination designed to test their ability to integrate all three areas of knowledge. In this final phase of the programme students are also required to undertake a special study in depth. This project may consist of a research paper, a piece of creative work in literature, science or the arts, but must demonstrate the relevance of the topic to liberal studies and proficiency in "liberal" inquiry. When the proposed project is initially approved a student is assigned to a faculty adviser in a related area. Finally, students attend a four-week inter-area seminar which focusses on a central theme or topic directed by an interdisciplinary team of three University professors representing each of the three areas of study.

The Bachelor of Liberal Studies/Upper-Division is essentially a truncated version of the normal B. L. S. programme in which the core study segments are completed in one rather than three years. The final year's work consists of the inter-area study, study in depth and inter-area seminar segments of the regular B. L. S. programme. In the first year students attend a two-day introductory seminar, complete the core curriculum studies in Humanities, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences and attend a three-week seminar in the area of their choice.

Special curriculum studies have been developed for students with particular interests, such as the legal Assistant Program and the Open Learning Fire Service Program. In addition to these structural studies, the College provides adult students with the opportunity to develop credit interdisciplinary courses closely allied to their professional and vocational objectives in consultation with academic staff and with the approval of the faculty. Such courses earn general university credit.

The purpose of the Master of Liberal Studies programme is to broaden and expand students' horizons and to enhance their capabilities in a professional field:

> The program is ideally suited to the individual who has reached a level of personal achievement, community responsibility, or professional standing that demands the broad liberal learning essential to analytical thinking, critical judgment, and decision making.[13]

The objectives of the programme are to attain:

1. A high level of competence in the art of liberal inquiry in a selected field of knowledge (Social Sciences, Humanities or Natural Sciences);
2. Ability to pursue in depth major problems or themes with interrelationships among the several fields of liberal study;
3. An appropriate level of competence in the evaluation of information, ideas, opinions and value systems;
4. An improved capacity for creative thinking; greater capacity for self-directed study; and
5. An improved ability in oral and written communication with people in one's own field and with individuals in other fields as well.[14]

There are five major steps or phases in the Master of Liberal Studies programme: a week-long, residential, introductory seminar, directed study in one of the three areas of the Humanities, Natural Sciences or Social Sciences; a residential colloquisim of three weeks; advanced study and preparation of the master's thesis; and, finally, an advanced residential seminar of three weeks. It constitutes a two-year programme under normal circumstances. The introductory seminar and

[13] Ibid., p. 14.
[14] Ibid.

associated inter-area core readings are designed to provide an introduction to the interdisciplinary perspectives of the programme and to provide a broad general background in the three areas of concentration: Humanities, Natural Sciences and Local Sciences. Each student is also expected to select an area of concentration from these three fields for the directed study phase while at this seminar and to arrange with his/her faculty adviser reading assignments and the method of reporting work done on these. On completion of this phase a student is eligible to attend the three week residential colloquisim which is directed by an interdisciplinary team of two professors. The purposes of the colloquisim are to provide a graduate seminar on a particular theme or topic and to enable students to develop a topic and prospectus for their thesis.

The advanced study phase permits the student to focus study on specific topics of interest leading towards the preparation of his/her master's thesis. The thesis is expected to be a substantial paper based on library resources and/or original research and must demonstrate the interdisciplinary perspectives and methods of the programme. During this phase the student maintains close communication with his faculty supervisor (major professor) and submits drafts of his thesis to other members of the thesis committee. In order to qualify for attendance at the advanced residential seminar students must have a reading copy of the thesis approved by their supervisor and submit a 2,000 to 3,000 word abstract for distribution to other participants of the seminar. The seminar is directed by an interdisciplinary team of two professors. At the seminar students explore a theme or topic in depth. Each student must also present and defend their thesis before the group and meet the thesis committee to discuss any changes and corrections to the thesis. After the seminar students are required to make any alterations indicated, submit the thesis in its final form and complete any oral examination and any other evaluation specified by the committee. The normal time for completing the programme is two years, though the time element

is quite flexible.

The rationale for introducing liberal studies programmes has been succinctly stated in a University newsletter:

> Teaching older students who have had work experience and are more mature presents a different set of demands than teaching the traditional student who comes right out of high school.[15]

Experience has shown that these innovating programmes have been as stimulating and challenging for staff as they have been for students. In 1982 some 100 academics from different departments, schools and colleges constituted the faculty of the College of Liberal Studies. Most held full-time appointments in their regular academic unit and served on the liberal studies faculty on an overload basis for appropriate additional remuneration. Terms of appointment include a terminal degree in their subject and at least one year's teaching at the University of Oklahoma. The College is administered by a dean who is advised by a ten-member committee elected by and from the faculty. One of the tasks of the committee is to appoint members of the faculty.

Faculty members determine the extent of their own involvement in the activities of the College. The work of faculty includes advising students: leading seminars: directing learning contracts, research papers and theses: and helping to select curricula materials. Academics are attracted to the College because they find adults more motivated and interested in their studies than younger students: because the interdisciplinary nature of core studies is attractive to professors who are normally limited to their own disicpline: because team teaching is interesting and challenging: and because the new information and ideas and the broader perspectives acquired enhance their regular teaching work.

---

[15] Notes on Teaching: A Newsletter from the Office of Instructional Services for Faculty and Teaching Assistants, Vol. 3, No. 3 (March, 1982), p. 1.

In 1982 524 students were enrolled in the Bachelor of Liberal Studies programme and a further 278 in the B. L. S. Upper Division option. The master's level degree programme attracted another 150 students. Since these are programme enrolments they represent quite substantial student involvement. Interestingly enrolments in these programmes have remained stable despite the drop in enrolments experienced by other liberal arts programmes across the United States. This stability is attributed to the quality and nature of these programmes and to the commitment of the faculty to them. Students are attracted by the flexibility in both the formal and the time requirements of independent study, the relevance of the studies to professional and vocational interests and by the opportunities offered to pursue individual interests. Indeed, the Bachelor of Liberal Studies programme was singled-out by a recent national symposium on quality non-traditional programmes as a model interdisciplinary curriculum.

In addition to its Liberal Studies degree programmes, the University of Oklahoma has a Centre for Continuing Education which is directed by a Vice Provost (who is also Dean of the College of Liberal Studies). It operates a learning centre consisting of 15 buildings with 'instructional space' for 1,500 people and residential accommodation for 260 persons. The Centre provided continuing education and public service for some 57,000 participants from all over the world during 1982 in subjects ranging from calculus to history and from drug dependence to oil well blowout prevention. A total of 200 college level and 75 high school level courses were offered by independent study as well as special credit programmes through classes, conferences and workshops held on campus and the credits awarded for formal and experiental learning occurring at international locations. Graduate degree programmes in areas such as government studies, education, business and economics and human relations and social work were also offered on a part-time basis.

Similarly, non-credit courses and fine-collegiate programmes were available through on-campus classes, conferences, workshops, seminars and independent study. Five special units provided professional continuing education, namely, the Centre for Business and Management, the Oil Well Blowout Prevention Systems, Continuing Engineering Education, the Centre for Educational Development and Public Management Programs. Public service was offered through Southwest Centre for Human Relations, the American Indian Institute, the Centre for Child and Family Development and Urban and Community Programs.

Independent study was employed in relatively few of these activities. Enrolments in independent study programmes, including Liberal Studies, totalled 5,795 in 1981-82. The majority of these were in college level credit courses (3,572). High school course enrolments amounted to 1,942 and non-credit courses attracted only 281 independent study students.

A good deal of space has been devoted to the continuing education and independent study activities of the University of Oklahoma because they illustrate how extensive these programmes often are at American universities and how much importance is sometimes placed on them by university authorities. In particular, the Liberal Studies degree programmes are quite interesting and informative. They seem to offer a much better approach to interdisciplinary study than the bachelor of general studies canvassed several years ago did. They certainly seem to be the kind of programmes which could readily be offered both on and off campus by independent study methods and which many mature age students would find attractive. They might also serve as a useful model for interdisciplinary degrees in social science, or, perhaps, for a major in Australian Studies within the Bachelor of Arts Degree.

The Department of Independent Study by Correspondence, University of Florida

The department of Independent Study by Correspondence at the University of Florida is part of the much larger Division of Continuing Education which is responsible for all the continuing education, extension and public service functions of the nine-campus State university system including evening classes, extension classes, workshops, seminars, conferences and special services. Consequently, as in the case of the University of California, faculty for both continuing education in general and independent studies in particular are drawn from the various campuses.

The Department of Independent Study by Correspondence at the University of Florida, Gainesville, serves all the public universities of Florida. Its credit courses and many non-credit courses have therefore been prepared by faculty from several campuses. The faculty who develop the courses are also responsible for 'teaching' them and for all assessment and evaluations. Although credit courses meet on-campus course/degree requirements an external degree is not offered. Indeed, no more than one-quarter of a degree can be completed by independent study. Two-thirds of the independent study students taking college credit courses are normal on-campus university students. Moreover, gifted high school students are permitted to enrol in undergraduate courses for credit. It is therefore obvious that independent study is seen essentially as a method of supplementing on-campus programmes.

In 1981-82 a total of 5,083 independent study students were enrolled at the University of Florida. More than half of these (2,937) were taking college credit courses. A further 564 were enrolled for high school courses, while 1,582 were taking non-credit courses. The Director of Independent Studies informed me that there were approximately 6,000 independent study students in 1982-83 - 5,000 new and 1,000 continuing students - and that about half of these were taking college level credit courses. Although a number of specific non-credit courses were available, enrolment on a non-credit basis was also accepted for all credit courses. Non-credit courses

were self-financing so that this area of teaching did not trench on normal university revenues. In 1981-82 a total of 169 courses were available by independent study, but it was expected that the number would increase as a comprehensive curriculum revision progressed.

In the American tradition of correspondence teaching the courses are developed around prescribed textbooks, supplemented by some additional recommended reference reading. They are divided into lessons each of which is introduced in a study guide by a discussion of the major questions or issues of the topic involved and ends with an assignment which the student must prepare after completing the prescribed reading listed in the study guide and submit for assessment and comment. In most cases there is a final examination and often also a mid-term one as well. In an occasional course, such as ENC3213 Technical Writing and Business Communication, assessment is done entirely through written assignments, such as essays, reports, proposals and resumes. Credit courses are developed by regular academic staff on an overload basis for an appropriate stipend and assignments or lessons are marked at piecetime rates.

In many ways the University of Florida's independent study programme is typical of general United States practice. Its main purpose is to supplement on-campus teaching by enabling prospective students to achieve some advanced standing and permitting on-campus students to accelerate their progress through degree programmes or to make good failures or delays. There is no attempt to offer an external degree programme and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that independent study is seen as an inferior mode of college teaching. The use of regular faculty on an overload basis for course development is also a common American practice, though the involvement of the course developers in the actual "teaching" and assessment work does not appear to be so widespread. But it is quite possible that the academic caretaking of the courses and the assignment marking is done by teaching assistants

under faculty supervision. The stipends of between $500.00 and $600.00 seem excessively low by Australian experience. However, the study guides are what the title suggests. They do not compare, either in extent or substance, with the course materials produced within our own Division of External Studies. There is no attempt to produce a printed version of on-campus lectures. In the American system the textbooks provide the basic "course materials". The study guides are designed to assist students in their intelligent and effective use and to set the associated assignment work.

The incorporation of the independent study unit in a broader Division or College of Continuing Education is also a common practice in the United States. Almost invariably it is a relatively small part of a very broad continuing education and public service programme which is offered to both an on-campus and a wider clientele extending across the state and nation and sometimes involving the 'international' community. Like many other institutions the University of Florida makes the most of the college courses available through independent study by also offering them as non-credit courses, but it also endeavours to maximize its community outreach by providing a wide range of high school and non-credit courses, workshops, seminars and conferences designed to meet the needs of the state and wider community.

The Department of Independent Studies and Student Services, Pennsylvania State University

Pennsylvania State University consists of a state-wide system of twenty campuses. It has traditionally offered a very large continuing education and university extension programme and a relatively large independent study programme through its College of Continuing Education and Extension. Perhaps most emphasis has been placed on University Extension through which students receive a class-room type of instruction from regular and part-time faculty at nearly 250 locations in Pennsylvanian communities including State College itself. Thus most off-campus study is undertaken

through an 'extended campus' system which takes teaching staff to the students at community extension centres where they offer class-room instruction supplemented by learning resources and media teaching provided by the College of Continuing Education and Extension from the Central University Park Campus or by one of the associated campuses. Programmes are scheduled at times and locations convenient for working people and instruction is provided by a variety of methods formal and informal class sessions, informal seminars, computer assisted instruction, correspondence instruction, conferences, educational television, and new, interesting methods of off-campus educational programmes for adults.

Since I visited State College in 1975 the university structure has been radically reorganized. The eighteen branch campuses of the University, together with Continuing Education, Independent Learning and the Audio-Visual facility have been brought together under a Vice-President. The College of Continuing Education and Extension has retained its form and functions, but the subsidiary Independent Study unit has been amalgamated with the Photographic, Television and Graphic Art sections under the supervision of the Director of this restructured Department of Independent Learning and Student Services. Other sections of the former audio-visual division have been dispersed to appropriate parts of the University.

The Department of Independent Learning and Student Services, apart from the audio-visual services it provides for students in general, caters only for those students who are unable or unwilling to attend classes at a university campus or at the numerous community centres (some 250) the university has established throughout the Commonwealth. (No student needs to travel more than 30 miles to attend one of these centres.) Between 1975 and 1983 the number of enrolments in independent study courses has risen from about 9,000 to over 13,000 due in large measure to the popularity of a course on fire sprinklers. However, enrolments in this course have declined in recent years because of the reduction in building activities due to the

recession. Consequently, the Director anticipates that enrolments will eventually drop back to about 11,000. Part of the increase in enrolments has also been due to the policy of constantly introducing new courses and revising old ones and to he increasing use of ordinary and cable television which has proved to be popular. There has also been a significant change in the composition of the student group as a result of a decline in the number of enrolments of teachers and a rise in those from professional groups. According to Markowitz's survey Pennsylvania State University had 12,761 independents study enrolments in 1981-82. Over half of these students were taking non-credit courses (6,400). A total of 6,029 were enrolled in college level courses and only 332 in high school courses. The high school courses are purchased from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln which specializes in independent study at the high-school level.

Although there is a general policy of expanding the independent study programme sufficiently to permit the offering of external degrees it is clear that its main function is still to supplement normal college level teaching. A statement of its objectives made in 1975 is still applicable with slight modification to:

> Earn credits while working to finance full-time enrolment:
>
> Satisfy teacher certification requirements:
>
> Accelerate a full-time programme:
>
> Make-up grade point deficiencies:
>
> Keep abreast of the times and to prepare for advancement in special fields of interest:
>
> Make-up a failing grade:
>
> Make-up high school deficiencies:
>
> Continue to earn credits if it should become necessary to withdraw as a full-time student. [15]

[15] Independent Study by Correspondence, The Pennsylvania State University Brochure.

Nevertheless the Department of Independent Learning offers two associate degree programmes. Moreover it is possible to complete one bachelor degree entirely by independent study and to take all except five units in several other degree programmes by the same mode. The Director made it quite clear that the Departments' policy was to increase offerings in such a way that other degrees could be completed solely by independent study. Obviously independent study courses carried residential credit.

The rationale of the independent study programme is to permit students to enrol when it suits them and to study at their own pace at times and locations which suit their convenience. Traditionally the core of the course has been contained in printed course materials and text and reference books. These have been supplemented by audio-tapes. video-tape cartridges. slides and film strips and 16mm films. Computer-assisted instruction is used where appropriate and a dial-access information system is in use. Experiments begun in 1965 to test the efficacy of television teaching have proved quite positive and this medium is being increasingly used in independent study both in the form of direct broadcasts and cable television. Use has also been made of the telelecture and the telephone tutorial.

Independent Study Degree Program, Syracuse University

Established in 1870 Syracuse University is a private institution which receives some subsidies from the New York State Government. It has provided continuing education during most of its existence. but since 1918 this aspect of its educational work has been the responsibility of University College under the direction of a Dean. It caters for the continuing education needs of about 6.000 people. mainly in the Syracuse area. The University's independent study degree program was introduced in 1966 with a baccalaurlat degree in "Liberal Studies" which was designed especially for adult students. Like the programme at the University of Oklahoma it was built around a core of liberal studies. This original programme has since been reorganized and expanded so that two undergraduate and three graduate degree programmes are now

available by independent study: namely.

Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies.

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

Master of Business Administration.

Master of Fine Arts in either Advertising Design. or Illustration. and

Master of Social Science.

These independent study programmes carry residential credit. but have set. compulsory residences built into them. It is claimed that they have attracted able and interesting students.

The Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies requires students to take courses in four areas - humanities (literature. philosophy and fine arts). social sciences (psychology. sociology. history. political science. economics and anthropology). mathematics and sciences (physical and biological sciences). The emphasis is on the humanities and social sciences. but a third of the courses required are electives which may be selected from the four core areas or related disciplines. The programme is offered under the auspices of the University's College of Arts and Sciences. Enrolments in the B.A. programme had been declining until course improvements and greater publicity in recent years led to increased interest in the degree.

The Bachelor of Science in Business Administration is offered in co-operation with the School of Management. It focusses on the four areas of accounting. finance. management and marketing. but the student may choose a general business option which enables him/her to arrange a programme from the four core areas. The remaining courses may be selected from the liberal arts curriculum or some other approved area. This degree is offered to both part-time evening and 'external' students and also on an extension basis in another city in New York State. Its

admission standards are higher for independent students than for any other business programme at the University. Enrolments are limited to 20 each semester and twice that number are rejected.

Thus both of these bachelor programmes consist of core courses and electives and normally require nine hours study each week - three hours on each of three courses. There is provision for accelerated progress through a degree and for extension of time to complete a course. Students may meet as much as two-thirds of the degree requirements from prior credit (advanced standing), leaving a minimum of 30 credits to be earned by independent study to complete the degree. Credit may be granted for assessed non-traditional and experimental learning. The academic year consists of three semesters. Each semester begins with a week-long residence.

The Master of Business Administration is designed to prepare existing and future managers to deal effectively and efficiently with the problems of organizational management. Admission to the programme is very competitive. It is based on an evaluation of the applicant's undergraduate degree record, professional experience and performance in the Graduate Management Admission Test designed by the Educational Testing Service at Princeton, New Jersey. Advanced standing of up to 18 of the required 54 credits may be granted and it is possible to secure exemption from 16 others without having to do substitute courses. The programme must be completed within seven years and a grade point average of B must be achieved before the degree is awarded. It is essentially a coursework programme consisting of a core of management courses and additional electives. But six elective credits can be earned through a faculty sponsored independent research project or a thesis. As in the B. A. and B. S. programmes the academic year consists of three semesters. Each begins with a week-long residence.

The Master of Fine Arts was developed for working artists. It is offered in cooperation with the College of Visual and Performing Arts and may be taken in either

advertising design or illustration. Admission is based on an evaluation of academic qualifications, artistic experience and the quality of the students' portfolio of art. Only 15 new students are accepted each year. Thirty credits are required to complete the degree, but no transfer of credit is allowed. Over the two-year period of the programme students are required to attend three different summer residences and complete a research paper and/or thesis. In addition, they must meet with their faculty advisor for 22 days. In this programme a semester is one year long. Intensive work begins at the first summer residence. After preliminaries, such as registration, orientation and counselling have been completed students have sessions with visiting professionals and may be involved in television production, illustration, history, critiques, projects and assignments. Each student will be given an assignment to complete before the next residence. After a similar second summer residence students are given a substantial research paper or project to complete for presentation to a committee of faculty and selected outside experts at the third summer residence. The degree is awarded after this work has been approved. In between residences students are required to meet with their faculty adviser on eleven days in each of the two semesters. These meetings normally take the form of long weekends and are usually held in communication and design centres, such as New York, Chicago, Toronto and London where students visit agencies, studios and production and publishing houses and hold project critiques.

The faculty were reported to be very enthusiastic about the master of Social Science programme which is offered through the prestigious School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. Admission is based on academic qualifications and other material submitted by the applicant, but potential applicants are invited to strengthen their qualification by taking up to four graduate social science courses before seeking enrolment. Up to 6 transfer credits may be accepted towards the 30 credits needed to complete the degree but these must have earned a grade of B or better and students

must maintain at least a B grade average to "remain in good standing".

An interdisciplinary approach to broad social science problems based on a comparative analysis of the world's major cultural areas is used in the programme. Special attention is paid to international relations and the foundation of major societies. The programme has three components: an introductory seminar (3 credits), core area studies (18 credits) and a final project (9 credits). The introductory seminar is held in the first two-week summer residence period and focusses on the important social science theme chosen for the year (or semester). There are four core areas - European cultures, American cultures, the non-western world and international relations. Students must complete studies in three of them. The final project is designed to enable students to study a topic from one of the core areas in depth. It may take the form of a thesis, a research project, a travel journal, some other expression of personal and professional interests, or readings and research in areas related to the social sciences. This work is presented at the second summer residence and must be approved before graduation. Students may enrol at any time of the year and work at their own pace. They may not attend their first residence until the end of the first semester.

The residences are obviously a central feature of independent study degree programmes at Syracuse University. In the baccalaureate degree programmes and the M.B.A. students must attend a seven-day residence at the beginning of each semester (three times a year). If beginning the programme students will participate in an orientation session, receive counselling; have their advanced standing evaluated and register on the first day. Continuing students will sit final examinations for the former semester's work. During the subsequent six days participants will attend classes, prepare assignments, complete reading and undertake research. In classes the faculty will provide an overview of the course, explore difficult sections of the course in depth and assign work for the independent study segment. What is done will

vary with the subject and the staff member, but at the end of the week each student will have work assigned for the semester and will know what his/her assignments are, how they are to be done and when they are to be submitted. Some will be submitted during the semester, some at its end. The seminars are integral parts of the Master of Fine Arts and Master of Social Science programmes.

The importance of the residences is also apparent from the limited nature of the course materials provided. In conformity with general American independent study practice the courses are based on carefully selected textbooks which are supplemented by residential lectures and seminars rather than by the usual study guides. Although the Independent Study Degree Program Handbook asserts that students take with them from the residences "all the study materials" they need: "Textbooks, article reprints, science kits, study guides, syllable and reading lists". I was reliably informed by Assistant Director Davice Chimene that study guides are not used and that faculty seldom send out other materials. Students receive most of the direction and assistance given during the residences, but they are encouraged to contact faculty and administrators by telephone (toll free) or letter should any problems or questions arise.

The faculty are full-time Syracuse University professors who have been invited to work in the independent study degree programmes on an overload basis and have the approval of their departmental chairman. "They are all distinguished in their respective disciplines and combine dedication to teaching with sensitivity to the needs of adult students". [17] Teaching assistants are never used at residences and, although the programmes may vary from on-campus ones and the teaching methods are different, the relevant schools and colleges ensure that independent study offerings reach the high standards of the University. Consequently the quality of the

[17] Independent Study Degree Program, Syracuse University, p.2.

Independent Study Degree Program is never questioned.

In terms of enrolments the Syracuse Independent Study Degree Program is not large. In 1983, 431 students were enrolled in the baccalaureate programmes, 313 for the Master of Business Administration and 150 in the other two masters programmes. But it must be borne in mind that these are degree and not course enrolments as is the case with most other statistics used in this paper. Students range from the relatively young seeking to establish themselves in a career to older people wanting to advance or change their career or who are studying for personal enrichment. The response of academic staff indicates that the motivation and abilities of these adult students have made them an interesting and challenging group to teach.

The Independent Study Program is advertised by Syracuse University mainly through the print medium. Experience has shown that placing items in the `Directory' of the New York Times is good value because of the newspaper's nation-wide circulation. However, target advertisements in specific professional journals have also been worthwhile. General advertising has not proved fruitful. Appropriate mailing lists are purchased for use in mail promotion. International advertising in the International Herald has been effective, especially in the Far East. The Director has also undertaken personal promotional trips using prestigious and creditable recruiting locations. Good results have been achieved by using this method of advertisement and recruitment in Canada.

Obviously there are similarities between the Syracuse University's B. A. in Liberal Studies and Master of Social Sciences and the Bachelor and Master of Liberal Studies at the University of Oklahoma in that they consist of core studies in the areas of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences and are concerned with the inter-disciplinary study of society. But the comparison ends there. The Syracuse programme follows the course unit approach. Whereas Oklahoma has broken away from tradition to develop highly integrated interdisciplinary degree programmes which

are divided into phases or steps rather than into unit courses and semester time slots. Moreover, the Oklahoma programmes are more thoroughly interdisciplinary in character and in the way they are taught and learned. The textbook approach has been abandoned and the teaching/learning process revolves around reading programmes and seminars which are inter-disciplinary in approach and exposition. The Oklahoma programmes have also broken away completely from the traditional lesson/assignment methodology of normal American independent Study practice. By contrast the Syracuse programmes have retained a modified form of this methodology.

Compulsory periods of residential study have been built into the degree structures in both cases but the role of the residences is not the same. At the undergraduate level the Syracuse residences more or less take the place of the traditional study guide in supplementing the textbook(s). Oklahoma residential periods, on the other hand, are devoted to seminar work which grows out of the independent study reading schedule and assignments. There is more similarity between the role of residences at the Masters level, except that the course unit approach is basic to the Syracuse structure and the final project does not seem to have the same importance. In short, the programme is a derivative of traditional teaching methodologies and is not as well integrated nor as interdisciplinary in nature as the Oklahoma Masters curriculum. The Master of Fine Arts seems to be closer to the Oklahoma model.

Metropolitan College, Boston University

Boston University is a private institution which has grown from a theological college into a medium size university since World War II. It is situated in a city whose most important industry is education and has to compete for students with such prestigious institutions as Harvard University, M.I.T., Tufts University and Boston College. It is not surprising therefore that it should become deeply involved in continuing education and university extension at both the credit and non-credit levels. Metropolitan College was established to promote and direct these activities.

The work of the College takes four forms: evening classes, extension classes, summer schools, and conferences. Independent study and correspondence education are not significant features of the Colleges programme. By far the most important function of the College is to mount evening classes for part-time students for both credit and non-credit. The bulk of these classes are held on campus at Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, but there is a small administrative unit which also arranges classes at strategic locations in suburban Boston in the extended campus manner. The summer schools are a specialized extension of the same functions and are confined to the campus. The organization and staging of conferences is another activity which the College sponsors and which can be quite profitable. The programme as a whole is self-supporting and, no doubt, increases university revenues.

University faculty are employed on an overload basis to teach students enrolled in credit and many non-credit courses. But suitably qualified non-faculty personnel are often engaged to teach specialized and more `practical' non-credit courses. The credit programme offers some students an opportunity to complete a degree while working, or being involved in other day-time activities, but it also permits others to accelerate their progress through a degree programme, to make good a failure or low grade, to recover `lost time', or to accumulate advanced standing before enrolling full-time. In view of the high cost of fees ($8,000 per annum for a full-time arts student or $13,000 for a full-time medical student) the continuing education programme provides attractive opportunities for students to save both time and money. Non-credit courses serve a different clientele and provide less formal academic qualifications and experience which can improve the prospects for career advancement or offer opportunities for self-improvement and personal fulfilment.

Athabasca University, Alberta, Canada

Perhaps Athabasca University's nature and functions are most succinctly summarized in the statement of its goal:

> Athabasca University's goal is to provide a university education for adults who are unable or unwilling to attend a conventional university. By combining an open admissions policy and year-round registration with distance education methods, Athabasca makes university education available to any adult who wants it.[18]

Originally conceived as a campus-based university in 1970, it was re-established in 1972 with the new mandate to conduct a pilot project in the development of a home-study programme from its base in Edmonton. It became a baccalaureate university in October, 1975, and gained permanent status as a self-governing institution under the Alberta Universities Act on May 18, 1978. Following a decision to move the institution to the small town of Athabasca, some 100 miles north of Edmonton, construction on permanent facilities began in March, 1983. Relocation of the central offices of the University from Edmonton to Athabasca are planned during the period May to December, 1984.

True to its goal Athabasca University admits any resident of Canada who is over 18 years of age regardless of his/her academic standing, though Student Services will provide an assessment of academic skills prior to registration for those who ask for it. Students can register for most courses at any time during the year, but the start date in most cases is the first day in each month. Students are given 12 months to complete a 6 credit course and six months to complete a 3 credit course. However, additional time to complete a course can be purchased at the rate of $10 per month. The transfer of appropriate credits gained at other universities or colleges is provided for.

Students must register under one of four categories: degree program, transfer program, visiting student, or non-program. The nature of the first is self-evident. The second covers students who are earning credits at Athabasca University towards a degree at some other institution. The visiting student category is designed for students of other institutions who have been forced to discontinue full-time study, but

[18] Athabasca University 1983/84 Calendar, p.1.

who wish to continue their studies on a part-time, independent study basis. The non-program category permits students to take almost any course which is related to their personal or career-related interests without specifically working towards a degree. It has proved very useful to those who wish to explore their interests before choosing a particular degree programme. There is provision for students to change their category and to secure credit, where appropriate, for courses already completed. Nearly all courses can be taken on a non-credit basis by "auditing" them. Under this arrangement students (auditors) are given access to all course materials and support services, but may not sit the examination, though they can change their status, sit the examination and receive credits if they notify the Registry in writing before the mid-point of the relevant teaching period. This arrangement is much like that in operation at University Extension, University of California, Berkeley.

Athabasca University offers more than 100 courses in the four main areas of administrative studies, natural sciences, social sciences and humanities. It has three undergraduate degree programmes: Bachelor of Administration, Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of General Studies. Concentration of study is offered in French, English, History, Sociology/Anthropology and Canadian Studies and is possible in other areas for students who can take courses at other institutions. The Bachelor of General Studies may be taken in Liberal or Applied Studies. Formally structured transfer programmes are available with the University of Alberta for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and with the University fo Calgary for the Bachelor of Social Work and for the Post-RN Bachelor of Nursing. The University is currently developing a number of certificate and diploma programmes, such as a certificate in administration and a diploma in labour studies.

A total of 6,610 students enrolled at Athabasca University in 1982-83, an increase of 24 per cent on the figure for 1981-82. They registered in almost 9,000 three credit point and 6 credit point courses. The profile of the 'average' students

offers no surprises. Although students from many parts of Canada were taking courses, the majority (70 per cent) lived in Alberta. The majority were working adults studying part-time. Sixty per cent were women. The main reasons given by students for taking university studies were to prepare for a future career and for personal development.

In many ways Athabasca University follows the Open University model. It was established solely as a distance education institution to provide university education for 'external' students. Its staff are dedicated almost wholly to distance education and its programmes are designed for adult learners. The character and role of course teams is set out succinctly in the Athabasca University Handbook:

> At Athabasca University, course materials are produced by teams, usually consisting of four principal members - a subject matter expert, an instructional developer, a visual designer, and an editor. The team writes the plan for the course, and once it is approved they develop the course materials.
>
> The subject matter expert is responsible for deciding what topics should be covered in the course and the depth to which each should be explored. This individual may be a course co-ordinator or another full-time professional staff member at Athabasca University who usually has several years of teaching experience. In consultation with other members of the team, the subject matter expert selects suitable textbooks and other materials to form part of the course package.
>
> The subject matter expert works closely with the instructional developer to present information in ways designed to facilitate learning. The instructional developer helps set up the learning objectives for the student, is involved in the preparation of practice exercises and self-tests, and may help set examinations.
>
> The visual designer is a specialist in visual communication. The visual designer determines the physical appearance of the course, selecting appropriate type-faces, creating cover designs and illustrations, and developing graphs and drawings.
>
> Finally, the editor, whose task is to ensure that materials are written in a clear and interesting way, revises material to attain uniformity of style, checks the accuracy of information, checks copyright clearances obtained

by the copyright officer, and advises on similar matters. [19]

When courses are revised other members may join the team. For example, tutors and a representative of Institutional Studies may be involved in the evaluation of the course.

The President, Dr Stephen Grlew, pointed out in an interview that now that much of the course development had been completed the emphasis in activities had shifted to course delivery. Time and experience have also reduced the need for course development advice. Indeed, the Director of Liberal Studies reported that the importance and input of the instructional developers and graphic designers has decreased as the academic staff have mastered the techniques of course design and distance education. At the same time, the role of the editors has broadened so that they sometimes combine some of the elements of instructional and graphic design with their editorial work. Mrs D. G. Bancroft, the Co-ordinator of Public Administration, added that course development had now become a linear process with different persons carrying out different stages of the process. Both spoke of the 'myth' of the course development team. They also adverted to the problem of adequate recognition of the quality and value of distance education and of those who are involved in it.

The role of the course co-ordinators is central to both the development and delivery of courses. It is also explained quite well in the Athabasca University Student Handbook 1983/84:

> Just as the tutor is the student's main contact with the university, the co-ordinator is the tutor's primary link with the university's academic program. Within the Learning Services division of the university there are two academic areas - Administrative Studies and Liberal Studies. Each area has a number of course co-ordinators, all of whom report to the director of the area. The Liberal Studies area comprises three units: Humanities, Science and Social Science, as well as the areas of Interdisciplinary Studies. Applied Studies includes the area of Administrative Studies and a wide range of professionally

[19] Athabasca University Student Handbook 1983/84, p.25.

oriented courses.

The course co-ordinator is responsible for the development and delivery of home-study courses. The co-ordinator may serve as the subject matter expert or as the course team manager, or frequently, as both.

Once the course is printed and on the shelves in the Student Materials Centre, the co-ordinator assumes responsibility for every aspect of its delivery to students, participating in student recruitment, hiring and monitoring tutors, providing supplementary sources of information for students and tutors, keeping instructional records, arranging special delivery services such as labs and seminars, marking and revising credit assignments and exams, and ensuring the course evaluation information is systematically gathered and collated, to be later fed into the course revision process. The co-ordinator usually has some tutoring responsibilities as well.

The course co-ordinator is an academic, equivalent to an assistant, associate, or full professor in a conventional university. In order to advance professionally, course co-ordinators must engage in the professional activities of their fields, doing original research, publishing articles and books, presenting papers at academic meetings, acting as editors or referees for scholarly journals, or doing consulting work. And, of course, co-ordinators are members of their academic area within the university and take part in regular meetings of their area as well as serving on a variety of university committees and task forces.

The co-ordinator's primary responsibility, however, is to make sure that their courses run as smoothly and effectively as possible. This includes responsibility for student completions, which means that course co-ordinators take a personal interest in each student's progress.[20]

The main task of the `course team' is to develop the course materials to the `final draft' stage. At this point the courses are fed into the computer which produces a print-out. This is sent to the editors who arrange the final lay-out and prepare the type-setting instructions for the computer which produces the photo-ready copy for the printers who then print the materials for the `Home-Study Packages' which are sent to the students. During 1983 the University had access to the computer at the University of Alberta, but had ordered a second computer preparatory to moving to its new location at Athabasca. Once the shift begins the second computer will be installed in the new facilities at Athabasca to ensure continuity of operation. When the transfer of operations is completed the two computers will make the University self-sufficient.

[20] Ibid., p.26.

Similarly, in 1983 some printing was placed with outside firms when the work flow exceeded the capacity of the University's printing machines. The purchase of a third machine will ensure the continuity of print production and make the university printery self-sufficient when the move to Athabasca has been completed in 1984.

The home-study package is the central component of most courses offered by the University of Athabasca. It contains all that is required for a course such as textbooks, workbooks and study guides, as well as audiotapes or project kits where appropriate. The majority of students are dependent on this package augmented by telephone tutorial assistance. However, some courses have an established study schedule tied to a series of instructional sessions such as television or radio broadcasts, laboratory sessions and workshops, but only in a few cases were these segments built into the original home-study package. Apparently they have generally been added after the course was developed. Another variation is the 'Seminar-and-Teleconference-supported Courses'. In this instance the paced schedule is determined by regular classroom or teleconferenced seminars. Students use the home-study materials, but also participate in seminars conducted at local centres or in teleconferences with a student group and tutors. In order to meet the needs of special interest groups and of students completing their degrees Athabasca University offers a number of 'reading courses' which are based almost exclusively on assigned texts which may be borrowed from the university library. Teaching is confined to minimal written instruction, telephone tutorials and, if possible, personal interviews. Finally, in special circumstances and in certain locations, the University offers classroom lecture courses on subjects for which packaged materials are not available.

Athabasca University is placing increased stress on the 'delivery' of courses. In this teaching/learning process the tutor has a crucially important role to play. Students are assigned to a tutor in every course they take who provides one-to-one telephone instruction. They are encouraged, indeed required, to telephone their

tutor regularly. The University meets all telephone costs and no limit is placed on the number of times a student may call his/her tutor. The President admitted that some students abuse the system and that it places a considerable strain on the budget, but pointed out that it substantially reduces the student 'wastage' rate. Once again the Athabasca University Student Handbook 1983/84 sets out the responsibilities of tutors succinctly:

> The home-study courses offered through Athabasca University are designed to allow independent study. But since students may feel somewhat isolated, we provide a tutor to assist students in each course.
>
> Your most immediate contact with the university is your tutor, who is a person employed part-time by the university to give support with the course content and administrative matters, and to be a human voice among all the printed course materials. The tutor marks and comments on assignments, discusses examinations, and assists you in improving your writing and study skills. In some courses, the tutor is also involved in organizing laboratory sessions, seminars, or discussion and self-help groups.[21]

Initially some students find one-to-one telephone discussion with a tutor somewhat intimidating, but most agree that this fear soon passes and that the tutor not only assists in the learning process, but also increases their motivation. Of course instructional staff and course co-ordinators are also readily available by telephone and often participate in the task of explaining and reinforcing the instructional objectives of the course materials.

Students are assessed by means of assignments and examinations. The former are evaluated by the tutors (and course co-ordinators) the latter by the full-time faculty only. The University is in the process of establishing a network of examination centres. In 1983 centres for this purpose had been established at Edmonton, Calgary, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie and Medicine Hat. Students living at such places are required to sit examinations at the centre. Elsewhere they must make

[21] Ibid., p.27.

arrangements for a suitable supervisor. Students in general are responsible for deciding when they are ready to sit an examination (with tutorial advice) and of notifying the University of the time and place at which they wish to take the examination.

A good deal of attention has been paid in recent years to new methods of distance teaching and student support. President Griew stressed the importance of teleconferencing in the work of the University. In 1983 this method of teaching was used in seven courses and there were 38 teleconferencing locations in Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. Seminars, workshops and laboratory sessions were also offered at local centres at appropriate times in the study schedules of some courses. Similarly radio and television programmes are broadcast over local channels as integral parts of other courses. These are usually converted into audio- or video-tapes for students unable to receive the broadcasts. At present experiments are being conducted into the 'Telidon' system of designing and delivering courses in which teleconferencing is combined with the despatch of colour graphics and text by Telidon.

Athabasca University is anxious to develop a regional administrative, tutorial and counselling system to augment existing services. Already in 1983 the University had regional offices at Calgary and Fort McMurray and examination centres at Grande Prairie and Medicine Hat as well. It belongs to Alberta's five-member Consortia of Post-secondary Educational Institutions which co-operate to offer a wide range of educational opportunities to Albertans who live outside the two major cities and has made arrangements with some nine other educational institutions in Alberta and British Columbia to provide a variety of services to its students. Indicative of some 'in-house' initiatives is the work of R. H. Rodrigues, Co-ordinator of Instructional Services, who arranges local tutorial services for 'native' Canadians. This form of personalized interaction has been found essential to the effective teaching of Indians and has proved

very successful. Most of the 'country' part-time staff used in this programme are sufficiently well qualified academically to serve as tutors, but Mrs Rodrigues has 'unofficially' appointed qualified, but less, 'professional' people to serve as 'group leaders'. Telephone instructional methods are used and teleconferencing arranged from time to time. Chuck Shobe, a former senior instructional developer, has been given the responsibility of providing similar services for the other students. President Griew concluded that experience had shown that 'rural' students needed and welcomed local tutorial services, but that 'urban' students did not need them and, in fact, generally preferred not to have them. Perhaps this observation suggests that the work of local tutors is more concerned with psychological support and motivation than they are with academic instruction.

One of the strengths of the Athabasca University system is the depth of its counselling services. At the 'grass-roots' level every student has his/her tutor who can readily be contacted by telephone and is able to provide advice on academic, administrative and more personal matters. Some students also have local tutors and group leaders to whom they can turn for advice. In addition students can contact centrally located instructors, course co-ordinators, administrators and counsellors by telephone should they wish or the need arise. Moreover they will have access to student services provided by a growing number of regional centres. But apart from these more 'personalized' avenues of advice each student is provided with excellent printed information and counselling materials, such as the Student Handbook and An Athabasca University Student Services Orientation Guidebook, tantalizingly titled "A Package of Shoelaces (And Some Guidelines for Lacing and Tying)". Even the University Calendar contains much helpful information and advice for students on many aspects of relationships with the University and their study activities. The central Student Counselling Service also organises seminars designed to accomplish the same ends.

The course packages are usually supplemented by reading and other materials borrowed from the library. The university library collection contains some 20,000 titles and 525 periodical subscriptions, as well as audio-visual materials including films, film strips, microforms, maps, videotapes, records, audiotapes, multi-media kits and audio-visual equipment which students may borrow for assignment preparation and further research. The collection will be substantially augmented through a grant of $5.2 million in 1983/84. Many course packages contain supplementary reading and/or supplementary material lists which students are encouraged to borrow from the university library. Small 'working' collections of key books and other materials have been placed in the university centres at Edmonton and Peace River and borrowing rights for students have been negotiated with the Calgary University Library. Students also have access to public libraries across the country, while Albertans may borrow from the provincial Extension Library if they do not have access to a public library. Clearly there has been a desire to escape the limitation placed on scholarship by a self-contained course package.

It is not difficult to find many of the central features of the Open University in the Athabasca system of distance education: an institution established specifically to offer independent study courses to adults unable or unwilling to attend traditional universities or colleges full- or part-time, academic and support staff dedicated solely to distance education; the use of course teams to develop courses; the establishment of an efficient 'industrial' sector to produce course materials; the development of an extensive and effective student service section; and the formation of a network of regional and local centres to provide convenient and accessible administrative, academic and support services. Perhaps one of the most important and significant additions is the in-house library service provided for students so that the scholastic thrust of courses can be both deepened and broaded by taking students beyond the 'course package'.

There are, of course, a number of interesting parallels to our own system which will be readily apparent to those acquainted with our programme: some staff dedicated to external teaching: a system of regional study centres, an effective library service for external students: an increasingly sophisticated production system for course materials and an emergent programme of student services. In some cases our initiatives in these developments pre-date the establishment of the Open University. However, in view of the proposed integration of External Studies academic staff into the discipline departments and the systematic expansion of continuing education, there is a need to expand the course development sector of the School by appointing additional course development advisors, graphic designers and editors. Much has already been done to strengthen the print aspects of course materials production. However, the audio-visual production equipment and procedures need to be up-graded and staff encouraged to make more use of them.

While we have an effective system of regional centres and have regularly formed local tutorial groups where student members warranted the appointment of a tutor or group leader, we do not have the facilities to offer students one-to-one telephone tutorials on a regular basis. Nor have we actively encouraged regular telephonic contact between lecturers and support staff and students on the scale practised at Athabasca University. Indeed, there has been a reluctance to use the telephone as a teaching device because of the time and monetary cost implications. Admittedly, the failure of most academic staff to use the teleconferencing facilities which have been available for several years has inhibited the expansion of this useful method of staff/student interaction. Arrangements need to be made for the regular use of the telephone as an additional avenue of instruction and staff/student interaction, both on a one-to-one basis and through teleconferencing. However, it must be borne in mind that the widespread use of the telephone for these purposes will be costly in terms of staff time and money.

One of the serious weaknesses of our present programme is the comparative lack of counselling and other student support services. Certainly a useful beginning has been made through the study centres and the recent appointment of Mr. Glad as an academic counsellor, but we can offer students nothing like the personalized tutorial service, course co-ordinator advice and central student services available at Athabasca University. For example, each student has regular one-to-one tutorial/counselling sessions with his/her tutor, central course instructors and co-ordinators may be readily contacted by telephone without cost and there are eight full-time counsellors available to give advice and help by telephone or mail in the central Student Services Section. Since experience at Athabasca University has shown that services of this kind substantially reduce student wastage rates urgent attention should be given to ways of increasing the availability of counselling and support services to external students.

Department of Independent Study, University of Minnesota

The Department of Independent Study at the University of Minnesota is part of the much larger College of Continuing Education and Extension which is responsible for part-time evening studies, continuing education, conferences, media studies and audio-visual library services. The college is managed by a Dean, two Associate Deans and an Administrative Director. The Department of Independent Studies, like those of many other American universities, is an administrative or service department charged with responsibility for managing the University's Independent Study Program. It offers 385 courses, of which only about 10 are non-credit units. There are 50 high school credit courses. A total of 8,559 students were enrolled in the programme in 1981-82. Of these 7,845 were taking college credit courses, 504 high school courses and only 210 non-credit courses.

Students may enrol at any time during the year. There are no entrance requirements, though specific programmes and courses may require prerequisite

study or experience. Study may begin at any time, but courses should normally be completed in one year. However, there is provision for one-year's extension of time for a fee. Most courses require students to sit a mid-course, as well as, a final examination and, normally, students are required to successfully complete all assignments and examinations in the sequence set out in the study guide in order to gain a credit for the course. However, there are exceptions to this general pattern. Students may contract to undertake a project in lieu of lesson assignments and then sit the final examination or demonstrate mastery of the course content in some other 'approved' way. Alternatively, they may gain credit by examination only, having prepared for course examinations independently. They may also secure credit for 'Directed Study' courses not listed for independent study or available through departmental reading courses. Projects requiring cross-disciplinary study are those most suited to this approach. They require the approval and involvement of an instructor with appropriate expertise in the area concerned.

Theoretically it is possible to complete a University of Minnesota baccalaureate degree through independent study, but in practice not enough courses are offered by independent study in any one degree area to permit students to do this. Moreover there are limitations on the use of independent Study credits in degree programmes in certain departments and individual schools. Nevertheless credits earned through independent study can be used in a variety of degree programmes and independent study students are advised to follow University procedures and to check the requirements of the college to which they wish to be admitted when planning their study programmes. It is possible, for example, to complete the Associate of Arts and the Associate in Liberal Arts Degrees by independent study. In the baccalaureate degree programmes, such as Applied Studies, General Studies, Technology, Management, Liberal Arts, Arts, Fine Arts, Science, Music, Individualized Studies and Education, substantial amounts of credit can be earned towards a degree by independent study.

Only in languages will independent studies credits be accepted in Graduate Programs. However, entire baccalaureate degrees can be earned by independent study through the Inter-College and University without Walls Programs.

Most Independent Study courses can be used in the acquisition and renewal of teachers' certificates though the Department does not evaluate teaching or education experience for the certificate. It does, however, administer special courses and programmes in the health care field for hospital and health care facility administrators, patient care administration, long term care administration education, mental health administration and nutrition. The Department is also deeply involved in the 33 certificate programmes offered by Continuing Education and Extension consisting of degree-credit courses or a combination of degree and certificate-credit courses which are regarded by business and industry as "valuable professional and technical preparation for employment and promotion". Indeed, work "on most of these certificates may be done through Extension Independent Study, Extension Classes, day school, summer session, or any combination of these".[22] Those certificate programmes available or soon to be available through Extension Independent Study are: Fire Protection, General Studies, Liberal Arts, Mathematics and Science, Accounting, Business Administration, Credit and Financial Management, Human Services, Industrial Relations, 'Management and Administrative Services and Undergraduate Development. The first four can be completed entirely by independent study, the remainder partially. These certificate programmes, it is asserted, "represent an accelerated and specialized approach to the subject matter. They are not, however, usually transferable to a degree program".[23]

Despite this array of possible objectives for independent study students the Associate Director concluded that independent study is mostly used as a means of

[22] See University of Minnesota Bulletin Extension Independent Study 1983/84, pp. 85-96 for details.
[23] Ibid. p.85.

supplementing day and evening programmes or as a way of securing credit at some other institution. Even so, she estimated that fewer than 10 per cent of students are regular 'day-school' students. The high school credit courses have been approved by the State Department of Education and satisfy the University of Minnesota entrance requirements. Like the college credit courses, they are generally used to supplement normal high school studies. In the words of the Bulletin:

> ...These courses are suitable for students who need specific credits for college entrance, students who have dropped out of school but wish to complete their diploma, handicapped students who cannot attend public high school, above average students who have permission to accelerate their high school completion....[24]

Obviously independent study at the University of Minnesota is not regarded as an alternative mode of teaching to traditional face-to-face methods.

The Independent Study credit courses are those of the normal departments, schools and colleges of the University and all the 'instructors' are approved by the academic departments. In most cases they are members of the university faculty, though some are drawn from other colleges or universities or are specialists in professional and business fields. The instructors follow the on-campus day-time format of lessons which are normally tied closely to the textbook(s). The instructors prepare the initial manuscript for the study guide and/or other print materials and are entirely responsible for content, structure and organization. The editors (there are five) standardize spelling, punctation, etc. and prepare the lay-out working from a word-processor original. A copy of the final photo-ready copy is sent to the Chairman of the relevant Department for checking before being forwarded to the printers for printing. Generally the editors use a standard format, but this is modified to accord with the content: for example, the lay-out for a history course will differ significantly

[24] Ibid. p. 75.

from that for a Mathematics course. The editors would like to be involved in course development at an earlier stage and, apparently, would prefer to have the final say on presentation by withholding camera-ready copy from the instructors. However, the Chairman of the Mathematics Department, in particular, insists on checking the final copy for accuracy.

There are two distinct Independent Study Programs - the media and correspondence programmes. In both cases the emphasis falls on the print materials. Students enrolled in the media courses are required to see, or listen to, the television and/or radio programmes assigned to the course, but the essential content and instructional aspects of the course are contained in the study guide and textbook(s). The correspondence courses rely entirely on print materials. In a real sense the media elements in courses are "cream on the cake". In 1982/83 seven television and seven radio courses were offered. They covered subjects as disparate as language and writing, child abuse, the Scientific Revolution, Vietnam, the Kennedy Era and "Murder, Mystery, and Mayhem: Whodunit". Generally about four assignments are required for subjects like history and considerable more in subjects such as Mathematics. Sometimes, especially in `media' courses, examinations are computer corrected.

The advertising and promotion of the Independent Study Program is the responsibility of one of the editors. There are different promotion programmes for media and correspondence courses. Consequently they also have separate budgets. A bulletin is sent to all continuing students which informs them of the Department's offerings and activities for the forthcoming year. A brochure is produced to advertise the media courses. Individual courses, for example, "The United States and Vietnam", are sometimes also promoted by brochure advertising when first offered. Advertisements are placed in television magazines, newspapers and target journals. Although free advertising time is available in the public interest segments of television

and radio stations, the Department purchased advertising time on radio in 1983.

Even though the University of Minnesota's Independent Study Program is larger than average, it is nevertheless, fairly typical in many ways of programmes of this kind in the United States. It is part of a large continuing education and extension college. It has a fairly open admission policy and permits students to enrol and begin studies at any time of the year, but limits the period of study to one year with possibility of a further year's extension. The college credit courses are approved by the regular university departments, schools and colleges and are, for the most part, taught by members of the faculty. They are based, with some minor exceptions, on a carefully chosen textbook and the `instruction' is provided in the form of a study guide. However, the course package is not completely self-sufficient since students are urged to use the University and other libraries for supplementary and required reading. A mail service is provided to enable them to do so. The use of television and radio is, perhaps, more unusual in independent study programmes, but not uncommon though in some other cases the media parts of the courses are more central to the teaching process. Assessment is based on assignments associated with the lessons and on examinations in conformity with general American practice. The computer marking of examinations even on the limited scale practised at the University of Minnesota is not so widespread. However, the use of independent study to supplement more traditional programmes and teaching methods is a common feature of most American independent study operations as is the offering of credit high school courses. Perhaps the diversity of the University of Minnesota's Independent Study Program sets it apart from those of many other institutions.

Independent Study, University of Wisconsin - Extension

The University of Wisconsin is a State institution with thirteen degree-granting campuses. Its very extensive continuing education and extension programme was managed until recently by an Extension Division which was a quasi-institution with its

own Chancellor, an annual budget of more than $30,000,000 and a separate identity like the twelve branch campuses. It had its own staff of more than 1,000. Indeed it was the third largest unit of the University, ranking only behind the central Madison and Milwaukee campuses. It was a system which had been developed since the turn of the century under the direction, first of Professor W. Lighty, and, more recently, of Professor Charles Wedemeyer. Its 1,000 staff worked in thirteen academic programming areas, arranging, preparing and teaching extension courses. It included, Departments of Evening Classes, Conferences, Independent Study and, especially, the Division of Educational Communications.

Over the years as the branch campuses developed their own extension and independent study programmes some opposition to a free-standing Extension Division arose. After an extensive investigation the Board of Regents decided to integrate the Extension Division into the central Madison campus. However, it had not yet been decided when I was in Madison in 1983 whether Extension would retain its own budget or whether extension finances as well as the academic staff would be dispersed among the participating departments and schools of the Madison campus. Dr. Donald Kaiser, Director of Independent Studies, was of the opinion that the quality of extension and independent study courses would inevitably decline markedly over time if Extension lost budgetary control over the programme.

Despite the numerous campuses and colleges, population distribution and a harsh climate have militated against a replica of the extended campus system adopted in Pennsylvania. Ninety-five per cent of Wisconsin's population is concentrated in the southern half of the state so that some part-time students would have to make a round trip of 100 miles to attend classes on one of the campuses and teaching staff would have to travel an extensive circuit of locations, often in very harsh weather conditions, to offer classes in the hinterland. Since 1965 the University of Wisconsin has therefore developed an educational communications system which, by using modern

communications technology, permits people to undertake extension studies at nearby "listening" locations in courthouses, Extension offices, libraries, University Campuses, agricultural centres, county offices, government offices and hospitals, and academic staff to teach them without leaving their campus. There were about 200 of these locations in 1974 (138 in 1983) and 24,000 people in 100 communities participated in the 1,000 programmes provided by the Extension Division. These programmes covered such diverse areas as Medicine, Pharmacy, English, Law, Social Work, Home Economics, Library Science, Education, Nursing, Physics, Agriculture, Engineering, Economics, Business and Arts.

Two major communications networks provide the media of instruction for these extension courses: namely, the Educational Telephone Network (ETN) and the Subsidiary Communications Authorization (SCA). "ETN is a private four-wire telephone network that takes the form of a huge party line with a number of parties on the same line. Instead of linking individual homes, it links courthouses, Extension offices and University of Wisconsin campuses and centres". ETN provides "an instant and personalized educational channel" for more than 100 Wisconsin communities with almost 140 specific listening locations.[25]

> All listening stations have identical equipment: a suitcase-size box containing loudspeakers and microphones, which is plugged into a standard telephone coupler. The microphones have a bar which the student presses when he or she wishes to speak to the instructor. Questions, answers, and comments are heard by students around the state.
>
> The headquarters in Madison contains recording studios where almost all programs are taped in advance, as well as transmission facilities for carrying the programs to all the receiving locations. (Programs cannot be transmitted to selected locations.)[26]

---

[25] Lorne A. Parker, "Educational Telephone Network and Subsidiary Communications Authorization: Educational Media for Continuing Education in Wisconsin", Educational Technology, February, 1974, p.34.
[26] Ruth Weinstock, "Outreach by Telephone", Educational Technology Revisited, Profile 3, Planning for Higher Education, Vol.4, No.3:2/5 June, 1975, p.3.

Live lectures or other presentations can be transferred from any origination point through a portable unit that plugs into any telephone. but most are taped and mailed to the Madison transmission centre. When the presentation is completed. the live teacher is slotted into the system by telephone for questions and discussion.

There are three main programming areas for this network. Continuing Education is the largest of these and forms the basis of the entire network. It is concerned with practical courses for professional adults such as doctors. pharmacists. nurses. engineers. ministers. librarians and so on. Since some professionals must secure a certain number of credits annually in order to retain their licences. this Continuing Education source is of crucial importance. The second area is Public Service and includes the offering of courses of general interest. such as "Family Estate and Financial Planning". "Smoking Modification". "Legal Rights and Responsibilities in Marriage and Divorce". Occasionally the network has been used to bring skilled workmen. such as plumbers. up to date on revised regulations. The final area is the presentation of courses for both undergraduate and graduate credit. However. this is a small part of total ETN programming reaching only about 5 per cent of total offerings. Extension courses seldom duplicate those offered on campuses. The graduate credit courses are usually in the teacher education field.

Anciliary uses for the system include daily communication between campuses. faculty meetings from various campuses on a state-wide basis and emergency communication on insect pest control. weather. and so on. The network also provides a round-the-clock dial access service for the delivery of capsuled information. Originally set up to provide medical information. it has been extended to such spheres as "Dial-a-Garden" and "Dial-a-Kitchen". The ETN network operates from 7. 00 a. m. to 10 p. m. and is scheduled for approximately 75 per cent of the time.

The ETN system is not exclusively confined to audio communciation. A variation known as the Statewide Extension Education Network (SEEN) offers a visual as well as

two-way audio communication. It uses an electro-writer which serves as an electronic blackboard to transmit diagrams, formulae and graphs. There are 26 SEEN locations at which students can see graphic material created live by the instructors.

Experience has shown that the "listening span" of adults is from 12 to 15 minutes. Programmes are therefore divided into separate modules by various techniques, such as introducing two voices, inserting a role-playing segment, bringing in an expert or by having a period for discussion. On the assumption that "eye contact" was necessary, visual material, such as slides, transparencies, and films, were originally sent in advance for use by participants but the policy has been revised as:

> ...experience has found that it is more important for students to have printed material to take home. Without it, they concentrate on note-taking in class rather than participation. Consequently, the use of visuals has been downgraded and their cost shifted to the production of sophisticated study guides....[27]

The Subsidiary Communications Authorization (SCA) is an electronic technique that places two or more separate signals onto the single channel assigned to an FM radio station. The technique is known as SCA multiplexing and permits, in the case of the University of Wisconsin, WHA radio in Madison to send out several signals simultaneously. A special receiver is required for the reception of the SCA signal. The system provides a private point-to-point communications service which is not available to the general public. The University of Wisconsin's WHA Radio was the first station to use the technique (in 1966) on a regular basis and can secure state-wide coverage by utilizing the state FM network to broadcast to some 90 SCA receivers located in courthouses, University of Wisconsin campuses and centres, hospitals and high schools. Two-way communication is possible by placing a telephone call to the WHA-SCA studio, which is in turn transmitted over the SCA system so that everyone

[27] Ibid. p.3.

listening to the lecture at any of the locations will hear the discussion. I observed the system working very smoothly while I was at Madison during a programme on nursing practice.[28]

Experience has shown that both students and instructors need to go through some kind of induction course to secure the full benefits of the ETN-SCA systems. Teaching staff are often wary of technical devices and need to be convinced of their value and of the value of modifying their teaching practices to utilize them effectively. In turn, instructors must use an array of methods and techniques to accustom students to the media used and to involve them actively in the teaching/learning process.[29] An evaluation process has been built into each ETN-SCA programme in order to determine its success. The information secured is used in planning further development.

The cost of network production for instructional non-credit programs transmitted over ETN-SCA in 1974 averaged out at 14 cents per student hour exclusive of the instructor's time and instructional materials such as slides, printed matter, etc. The cost of the ETN lines, which are based at a special rate by the State, was 56 cents per mile in 1974 as compared to the standard charge of $3.00. It has been estimated that starting up or beginning an origination system could cost as little in 1974 as $6,000 to $10,000 in the United States.

Until the recent reorganization the Independent Study Department was part of the Extension Division, but came under the immediate control of the Division of Educational Communications. Independent study students may take courses earning credit towards a baccalaureate degree or a high school diploma or may enrol for non-credit courses for professional or vocational achievement, for earning continuing

[28] See Parker and Weinstock, op.cit.
[29] See Lorne A. Parker and Marcia A. Baird, "Humanizing Telephone Based Instructional Programs", Leaflet issued by University of Wisconsin Extension and Parker, op.cit.

education credit, for personal satisfaction or for learning new skills. In 1981-82 Independent Study served 9,442 students. Of these 5,277 were enrolled in college credit courses, 1,636 in high school courses and 2,529 in non-credit courses. Over 400 courses are offered by Independent study. Although most of these are credit courses, all credit courses can be taken as non-credit courses provided students have the prerequisites. Students may enrol and begin their studies at any time of the year and can work at their own pace, though they are normally expected to complete a course in twelve months. However, extensions of time for completion may be granted. Entrance to the independent study programme is fairly open, but it does not guarantee admission to a degree programme. However, it is possible to qualify for entry by completing the equivalent of one semester's work through independent study with at least a C average grade.

Although the Department of Independent Study has been anxious to offer full degree programmes, the prejudice of traditional academics to this mode of teaching has been strong enough to limit credits earned by independent study to 90 credits. In order to meet the residency requirement students must earn the last 30 to 32 credits on campus at a school of their choice. Even though it may be legally possible to earn up to three-quarters of a degree by independent study the Department's own handbook advises students that it would be "unrealistic" to complete a major portion of a degree in this way. Obviously the independent study programme is seen merely as a means of supplementing normal, on-campus programmes. Moreover, independent study credits cannot be used at the graduate level, though they can be used to remove deficiencies for admission to graduate school. Independent students suffer the final indignity of not being able to transfer grades and grade points to degree programmes.

Nevertheless the University of Wisconsin system as a whole does offer four Extended Degree Programs as an alternative to attending on-campus classes. These provide individual programmes "to fit differing work schedules and geographic

circumstances".[30]

The programmes are: General Studies (University of Wisconsin - Green Bay); Broad Area Studies in Agriculture (University of Wisconsin - River Falls); Business Administration (University of Wisconsin - Platteville); and Individualized Major (University of Wisconsin - Superior). These flexible programmes are based on learning contracts and recognise previous college and non-traditional, learning, including experiental learning. The procedures are outlined as follows:

> Through periodic meetings with faculty, an extended degree student designs and develops a self-tailored program to satisfy personal goals, while fulfilling academic requirements and meeting the standards of educational quality characteristic of the University of Wisconsin System. Using learning contracts, a student progresses by successfully demonstrating that competencies identified in each contract have been attained. This may be done through formal testing, through performance, and through presenting the results of study.[31]

These degree programmes were selected from those currently being offered on university campuses. Two Certificate Programs can also be completed through the Extension Independent Study: namely, the General Studies Certificate and the Certificate of Achievement. These certificates are designed to recognise a student's accomplishment in completing a sequence of university courses constituting a quarter of a degree programme or the freshman year of a degree course. If the right procedures are followed the credits can be transferred to a regular degree programme. In any case the certificates have importance in employment applications. Certificates of completion for non-credit courses are available for the same purpose.

---

[30] University of Wisconsin - Extension: Independent Study 1983-84 p. 13.
[31] A New Way to Complete a University Degree: Extended Degree Programs University of Wisconsin Brochure.

Generally courses are built around one or two textbooks, but each student is provided with a printed study guide to assist him with the course and is sometimes advised to read other reference books or articles available through a local library or an inter-library loan from Extension Library Services. Assignments or lessons are a central part of the teaching/learning process. These basic course materials and requirements are sometimes supplemented by audio aids, group study, radio and television broadcasts, films and slides and occasionally by use of the ETN system.

The design and preparation of courses is normally done by faculty of the University of Wisconsin. Writers from outside the University are usually only employed to produce courses under contract when the necessary expertise is not available on one of the campuses. Staff within the Department of Independent Study have sometimes been responsible for preparing courses, but more often give advice and guidance to course writers from the relevant academic department. Often the writer is involved in teaching the course during its introduction and is generally expected to supervise the instruction for the first year it is offered. After this initial stage the routine teaching work is usually done by a part-time instructor. Courses are reviewed regularly and modifications made when necessary to improve them and to keep them up to date. They are re-written when new textbooks are introduced.

Since the Department has until recently had its own faculty, departmental staff were able to oversee and arrange for the development of new courses, supervise the instruction provided and, sometimes, do the teaching themselves. Many had joint positions which allowed them to undertake both residential and independent study teaching. This practice was favoured since it ensured close relations with academic departments and made correspondence study more acceptable to traditional academics. Moreover, it seemed to lessen the feeling on campuses that Extension was poaching potential residential students since off-campus teaching became part of the "load" of regular faculty. However, much of the actual marking and grading of

assignments and examinations is done by faculty employed on a part-time, overload basis.

In developing a course the faculty member chooses the textbook(s) and prepares the original manuscript for the study guide. He/she is responsible for content and organization. The study guide divides the course into from twelve to fourteen lessons based on the textbook(s). Each of these generally has its own assignment. There is usually a final examination and sometimes also a mid-course one. The original manuscript is edited and laid-out for printing by the editors following a standard format. The final photo-ready copy is produced on word processors.

Despite the widespread use of educational technology in the Extension work of the University, experimentation with media mix in correspondence study has been fairly limited. Charles Wedemeyer has attributed this reticence to an over-riding concern by the Department of Independent Study to ensure that college credit is granted for Independent Study courses by academic departments. There is a trend towards the use of the ETN system, but a heavy reliance continues on printed materials. Perhaps acceptance of out-of-state and overseas students has inhibited the widespread use of the available educational technology.

The Department of Independent Study has recently undertaken an experimental media programme financed by the Federal Government which involves adapting existing courses from four or five discipline areas to radio, television and newspaper lessons. As part of the experiment $100,000 has been set aside to evaluate the programme. However, Donald Kaiser, the Director of Independent Study, pointed out that experience had already shown that students were not at all enthusiastic about the efficacy of radio, television and newspapers as a teaching technology. Evaluations of earlier experiments have shown that they preferred to use the limited time available for study on print materials. In his opinion the current extensive and expensive media experiment will show that students prefer `hard' print materials to media presentations

which will be seen as supplementary avenues of learning. He clearly considers audio-visual materials and media teaching as "cream on the cake". Perhaps Charles Wedemeyer mistook a hard-headed assessment of the high cost and low efficacy of audio-visual materials and media lessons in the teaching/learning process for a reticence to use new educational technology arising from faculty prejudice.

Since the University of Wisconsin was a pioneer in independent study (it began its programme in 1906) and apparently developed the methodology that has now been given a wide currency in the United States it is not surprising that the traditional methods are entrenched there. However, independent study has not been accepted as an alternative mode of teaching degree programmes and has been rejected as a suitable method of graduate tuition. Nevertheless the Extension Division has been very innovative in its wider educational role as the ETN, SEEN and SCA systems amply testify, though it is surprising that they have been used so sparingly in its Independent Study Program. There seems to be sound reasons for investigating these systems more fully with a view to determining whether they can be introduced to Queensland.

The Independent Study Department, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

In conformity with general United States practice the Independent Study Department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is a section of the Nebraska Centre (or College) for Continuing Education which is headed-up by Dean Quentin Gassner. The Centre is the operational arm of the Division of Continuing Studies which was established in 1909 to provide direction and leadership to the extension efforts of the University. As the Division's own brochure puts it:

> The Division assists in the planning and delivery of continuing education programs, and provides services to the part-time student clientele not in residence at the University. The Division plans and conducts over 1,500 programs and activities each year, with approximately 75,000 people participating in these programs. In its scope, variety of programs, and number served, the Division of Continuing Studies is one of the largest and

most successful operations of its kind in the United States.[32]

The Division uses a variety of non-traditional "programming approaches and delivery systems" to meet the needs of its diverse and widely scattered clientele. A brief description of its organization and activities may, perhaps, indicate the size and complexities of a typical American continuing education and extension unit. The Nebraska Centre for Continuing Education, located on the East Campus of the University, houses the offices of the seven departments of the Division and provides the facilities required for the continuing education programmes. Some indication of its facilitating role is given in the following description:

> The Nebraska Center is a residential conference center which is available for conferences, seminars, short courses, and meetings. It features an auditorium and conference rooms complete with audio-visual services, food services in both public and private dining rooms, and 96-room hotel. All hotel rooms are newly refurnished and redecorated. The Nebraska Center is used by a wide variety of groups of six to 600, including University faculty and staff, professional associations, public and private institutions, governmental agencies, and community organizations.[33]

The seven departments operating through the centre are Statewide Programs, Evening Programs and Adult Learning Services, Conferences and Institutes, Independent Study, Mediated Instruction, Counseling Services, and Communication Services. The functions of each of these departments are described by the Division brochure in the following ways:

> The Department of Statewide Programs is responsible for providing credit and noncredit programs throughout the state, for establishing specific contacts with other institutions for the purpose of cooperative programming, and for contacts with professional associations, state agencies, and business and industry to determine program needs. Among the types of programs offered

[32] University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Division of Continuing Studies Brochure, p. 1.
[33] Ibid., pp. 1-2.

through the department are non-credit conferences and workshops; Field Classes which provide university undergraduate and graduate courses at convenient locations throughout the state; and Flights and Study Tours which offer opportunity for domestic and foreign travel through organized credit courses.

The Department of Evening Programs and Adult Learning Services conducts the Evening Credit Program on the UNL campus; the Summer Reading Course Program; non-credit Communiversity courses in Lincoln; and provides a wide variety of adult learning services, including counseling, seminars and workshops for adult students at the University, and opportunities to participate in research and program planning.

The staff of the Department of Conferences and Institutes specialize in assessing group's needs and developing and conducting dynamic short-term educational programs to meet those identified needs. Their services include evaluation and follow-up components, and total logistical support, such as promotion, marketing, housing and meal arrangements, registration, etc., to insure a successful conference.

College credit, high school, and noncredit courses are offered through the Independent Study Department. The flexibility of independent study by correspondence permits students to continue their academic programs at their own pace, schedule, and location. Students from every state and 125 foreign countries are enrolled in the Independent Study Program, which is the largest university affiliated program in the United States.

A wide variety of college credit courses are offered by 29 university departments. A complete high school curriculum is provided by the Independent Study High School program which is accredited by the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges and the Nebraska State Department of Education. Many noncredit courses are offered, including several licensure certification programs.

The department's curriculum development staff works closely with authors of independent study courses in preparing course syllabi, and assists departments in developing supplemental teaching materials and study guides for campus-based courses.

The Department of Mediated Instruction is responsible for a variety of courses, programs and services involving the use of television, film, videotape, audio and video teleconferencing, and equipment.

The Department coordinates UNL telecourses on Nebraska's ETV Network and courses and programs on the University of Nebraska Continuing Education Audio Network serving eight Nebraska cities. The Film/Media Library makes nearly 6,000 films and other institutions, and produces videotapes of graduate level courses for distribution to business and industry. Technical and equipment support is provided for campus instructional programs and for other programs coordinated by the Division. Services range from the delivery and repair of AV equipment to audio and video taping conferences, lectures, and other presentations.

A Media Production Unit provides equipment and assistance for developing slide-tape presentations, special classroom materials, and audio

productions.

> Educational counselors are available to persons who wish aid in formulating their educational plans. The College Counselor explains academic requirements, helps assess career needs, and assists with registration procedures. Adults interested in college reentry programs will find the counselor's help particularly valuable. The High School Counselor answers questions about diploma requirements and courses offered by the Independent Study High School which lead to high school graduation, and helps students select and register for courses which meet their particular educational needs.
>
> The Department of Communication Services is responsible for the preparation and printing of educational and promotional materials used by the Division of Continuing Studies, developing marketing strategies, and preparing educational exhibits and other public media materials.[34]

In addition to its on-campus segments the Division of Continuing Studies is responsible for the Learning Centre at Scottsbluff in western Nebraska which constitutes the University's presence in that portion of the country. Its role has been described in the following terms:

> The staff of the University of Nebraska Learning Center in Scottsbluff represents the University in developing and administering educational programs, in supervising the activities of the Learning Center, and in developing working relationships with students and other educational institutions in the area.[35]

It will be obvious from these descriptions of the functions of its constituent parts that the Division of Continuing Studies is a quite large unit of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln which is responsible not only for part-time evening studies, television and media programmes, off-campus face-to-face teaching, conferences and independent studies, but also audio-visual and media production for on-campus teaching, counselling for extension and continuing education students and the production of all the course and promotional materials and services required for these

[34] Ibid., pp.2-4.
[35] Ibid., p.4.

activities. Under the University by-laws all continuing and extension education must be channelled through the Division. Its role is justified, at least in part, by the University's claim to be a 500 mile campus with a state-wide educational mission. In light of the wide cover the activities these units have and of the influence they must inevitably exercise the disquiet concerning the Extension Division's role in the University of Wisconsin system and the decision to integrate it into the traditional university structure is understandable even though the wisdom of the decision might be questioned.

Thus Independent Studies is a minor part of the Division's activities even though it is the third largest programme of those listed by the National University Continuing Education Association. During an interview in 1983 the Director, Mr. Monty McMahon, reported that some 15,000 students were enrolled in the Independent Study Program, of which about 5,000 were studying at the college level. However, Markowitz's statistics for 1981-82 indicate that total enrolments were 13,964 and that college level enrolments stood at 2,917, high school enrolments at 10,771 and non-credit enrolments at only 276. Thus the majority of independent study students were taking high school courses. Indeed Nebraska-Lincoln vies with the University of Missouri and Texas Tech University in the NUCEA's listings for the honour of having the largest high school enrolment (10,771, 10,629 and 9,359, respectively).

Not surprisingly the Department of Independent Studies employs school teachers to deal with this aspect of its programme. They write some of the courses and are responsible for `teaching' some of them, especially for assignment marking and dealing with student problems and queries. However, many courses are written by practising school teachers under contract and many lessons are also marked by school teachers at piece-time rates. The college level credit courses are written by university faculty. Course writers develop courses with the advice of instructional developers and editors. The writer provides the content and general structure and the

instructional developers advise on pedagogy, while the editors are responsible for the final lay-out of the study guides which are based on a standard format. The ideal procedure is for the course-writer to work closely with the instructional developer and editor when preparing the original manuscript, but sometimes these support staff are presented with a finished manuscript which they must then adapt to the standard format. The editors use word-processors to produce the camera-ready copy for the university printer. As is usual in America the courses are based on the textbook(s). Each course is divided into lessons by the study guide with integral assignments. In college credit courses there has been a tendency to reduce the number of assignments to accord with that required of day, on-campus students, except in subjects such as mathematics where learning is closely related to problem-solving or practice. Final and sometimes mid-course, examinations are generally an important part of course assessment. There is also provision for summer reading courses which begin with an orientation seminar in April and end with an evaluation session in the fall.

Students can enrol and begin study at any time of the year, but must complete their course(s) within a year unless an extension for a second year is secured. There does not appear to be any admission requirements apart from the need to ensure that all course prerequisites are met. However, students working towards a degree are advised to have their registrations approved by their advisers at the relevant degree-awarding college or university. Graduate independent study courses are offered, but students must register with the University of Nebraska's Graduate College before they have completed more than one-third of the programme if they wish to have the independent study graduate courses credited towards a degree. There is also a limitation on how much of a Nebraska baccalaureate degree can be earned by independent study, namely, from 25 to 60 credits. By contrast, the Division of Continuing Studies offers evening part-time students degree programmes in five areas. Indeed, the College Independent Study Bulletin makes it clear that

independent study is seen as a supplementary, rather than as an alternative means of earning college credits by pointing out that many students take independent study courses for a limited time, to supplement their schedule of on-campus classroom courses, or to fulfill the requirements in specific programmes. But student objectives are often broader than this since all credit courses can be taken on a non-credit basis. The Bulletin lists student objectives:

> To meet specific requirements for graduation.
>
> To prepare for a career in various vocational fields.
>
> To earn or renew a teacher's certificate.
>
> To satisfy a specific academic need or interest.
>
> To improve their general educational and cultural backgrounds.
>
> To earn college credit while still in high school.
>
> To meet certain certification and licensure requirements.
>
> To earn graduate credit.
>
> To upgrade their knowledge and skills in a specific field. [36]

The Department of Mediated Instruction offers a number of courses through television (telecourses) each year. During the fall of 1983 these were: Making it Count (Computer Science 103s); Personal Finance and Money Management (Finance 260s); Vietnam: A Television History (Political Science 260s); The Business of Management (Management 135s); Quality Circles (a non-credit course on productive organization); Personnel Time Management (a non-credit course); Stress Management (a non-credit course). In addition, two credit courses were offered through the University's Continuing Education Audio Network, i.e., through teleconferencing. The basic textbooks for these courses are posted to students and the television programmes are linked to a toll-free telephone/TV talk-back system

[36] University of Nebraska-Lincoln Division of Continuing Studies College Independent Study Bulletin 1983-1984, p.5.

which enables students to raise questions and problems with the professor(s) associated with the course. The lessons are broadcast over Nebraska's educational television channel. Saturday morning has proved to be the best time slot since this is when children's programmes are broadcast over the commercial television channels. It was clear from my discussions at Lincoln that the telecourses are not cost effective. Mr. McMahon pointed out that despite intensive advertising a telecourse seldom attracted more than 50 students. Given the high costs of course production, both in monetary and academic and support staff time such low enrolments do not justify the continued use of television as the principle method of instruction in cost accounting terms. It seems that the media programme is justified on grounds of prestige and publicity rather than on hard economic reasoning.

The Department of Mediated Instruction also offers courses through teleconferencing and is deeply involved in the development of the National University Teleconference network which was established early in 1982 after the Oklahoma State University produced a satellite teleconference for a national audience. Under the aegis of Oklahoma State University, 67 universities from 35 states formed the Network which includes Florida State University, Pennsylvania State University and the Universities of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Nebraska-Lincoln, as well as Oklahoma State University. The first experiment of NUTN was an audio teleconference organized by the University of Wisconsin. This was followed by a satellite teleconference arranged by Nebraska-Lincoln. Subsequently these two institutions organized two nation-wide teleconferences which were judged to be successful. It, is seen essentially as an extension of the normal conferencing activities of the Extension or Continuing Education units of member institutions. Nebraska-Lincoln's Division of Continuing Studies, for example, has advertised the Nebraska Education Television Network as an ideal base for satellite teleconferences.

The functions of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Division of Continuing Studies has been described in some detail in order to illustrate the size and complexity of units of this kind in many American universities. Of course they are variations on a theme and not clones of some stereo-type, often differing substantially in terms of organization and functions. Nevertheless, there are a great many similarities between them and they have comparable objectives and responsibilities. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's continuing studies and independent study programmes generally follows the traditional American pattern which often now incorporates the use of modern educational technology such as telephone, radio and television instruction. However, there has been an attempt to use television as the basic teaching medium in a limited number of courses. The experiment has demonstrated the feasibility of this approach, but it has not evoked a wide community acceptance of television as a satisfactory alternative to the more traditional modes of teaching and is therefore not cost-effective.

Correspondence Study, Division of Continuing Education, University of Utah.

Like the Division of Continuing Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the Division of Continuing Education at the University of Utah is responsible for servicing the non-typical students both on- and off-campus. In the words of *Class Edition* it:

> . . . is responsible for offering quality, college-level and youth courses to an audience that can't or doesn't want to attend regular, daytime classes at the U. [sic] Most DCE classes are scheduled in the evenings, on weekends or at other times convenient for working adults, homemakers and young people. All DCE courses are sponsored by University departments, and all instructors are approved by the sponsoring departments. Courses may be offered for credit or noncredit. In most cases, both options are available, with a reduced fee for noncredit. Students need not be formally admitted to the University to enroll in DCE courses; nor do they have to be working toward a degree, although many students find it convenient to finish a degree by taking courses through DCE, and a few of the University's departments now offer complete degree programs through DCE.[37]

[37] Class Edition, University of Utah, Division of Continuing Education, Schedule of Fall Classes 1983, p. 76.

The bulk of the Division's work is concerned with on-campus programmes involving evening and weekend classes, institutes and conferences, though there is an extension centre for the Davis County at Bountiful. For example, it is possible to complete certificates or baccalaureate degrees in Art, Business, Economics, Liberal Education, Psychology and Sociology and Masters degrees in Computer Science, Economics, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, Music, Physics and Political Science by part-time on-campus study. In addition, certificate programmes are offered in Secretarial Training and Management. From time to time credit courses are offered by television with supplementary written materials. For example, the current telecourse on the Geography of Utah is a 22 part television series credit course which encompasses the political, cultural, historical and sociological geography of the State of Utah which is backed by a comprehensive text consisting of graphs, maps, charts and a synopsis of the tele-lectures. To receive a college credit students must view the 22 video-taped programmes, submit all the written assignments and sit the term paper and final examination. The Division provides a counselling service for adults through the Centre for Adult Learning and Career Change. It also has overall responsibility for correspondence studies.

Correspondence studies is obviously only a small part of Continuing Education, but it is a long-standing and stable programme which is part of the Centre for Independent Study and Development. Until the appointment of the present Dean of Continuing Education, Dr. Oakley J. Gordon, some ten years ago the continuing education programme, including correspondence studies, consisted of non-credit courses generally prepared by people who were not members of the faculty as a public service. Under the leadership of Dean Gordon new relationships were forged with university faculty and with their co-operation the courses were made more academically respectable. As the faculty gradually assumed responsibility for course development and instruction more and more of the courses were accepted as credit

courses.

Altogether there are some 45,000 enrolments in the Division and, although only 20 per cent of the courses are non-credit, only about 40 per cent of students are enrolled in some kind of degree programme. The Division has a current income of about $5,000,000 and this makes it almost self-sufficient. University subsidies are limited to payment of the salaries of the Dean, the Director of Correspondence Education and a few other officers of a similar level. The Division therefore has "a bag of gold" which it uses to buy the services of faculty to develop courses and have them adequately `taught' - evening classes, extension classes, correspondence courses, seminars, conferences, etc. This financial carrot, together with close working relationships with departments, schools, colleges and faculty have led to a vigorous and effective continuing education programme.

Arrangements are made with departments to prepare and teach a range of courses over a period of several years. Alternatively arrangements of this kind are made with individual faculty members. In some cases properly qualified people from outside of the University prepare courses under contract with the approval of the relevant department or school. The work is generally done on an overload basis. The same procedures are followed in the development of correspondence courses. The stipend for developing a course is $3,000 and assignments are marked on a piece-time basis at $3.00 per paper. Between 200 and 400 correspondence courses are `active' each year. In conformity with normal American independent study practice each course is based on a textbook(s). The editors convert the manuscript of the study guide prepared by the course instructor into lessons according to a standard format. In the vast majority of cases the faculty prepare and `teach' the course, including assignment and examination correction. Although some marking is still done by teaching assistants, the Director of Correspondence Studies, James Pappas, hopes to completely eliminate this practice, but he admits that some of these

assistants have become very effective `teachers'. Consequently departments are encouraged to treat them as faculty. Peer approval of course materials is the main source of course development advice.

Some instructors have incorporated audio-tapes into the structure of many courses and the use of films is recommended in a number of others. The recommended reference reading set in some courses may be borrowed from the University library. Apart from the scheduled corresponding courses it is possible to arrange to take other courses offered at the University by special arrangement with the campus instructor. Presumably these are similar to the `reading' courses offered at other institutions. It is not possible to complete a degree through correspondence study. A maximum of 45 credits of a total of 183 credits in a degree programme may be earned through independent study. No graduate credit is available through this teaching mode. However, gifted high school students are permitted to earn credits toward a degree by correspondence study. Clearly correspondence education is designed to supplement on-campus learning. College courses may be taken for credit or as non-credit units and it is the student's responsibility to inform the University of his/her intention in this matter at the appropriate time. As is usual in these programmes, students completing non-credit courses are awarded Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for use in securing employment, promotion or re-licensure.

Students may enrol and begin study at any time during the year, but are given a year to complete a course with an option of two extensions for a fee. In 1982-83 Correspondence Study had 3,766 student enrolments and 4,413 course enrolments. By far the majority were taking college credit courses (4,191). By contrast there were 158 ordinary non-credit course enrolments and a further 64 Highway Engineering Technology non-credit course enrolments.

The University of Utah conducts an extremely effective promotion and advertising campaign for its continuing education programme each quarter. It has won many

national awards for this work.

There are few aspects of the University of Utah's continuing education programme which set it apart from those of other institutions, such as the Universities of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Florida and Nebraska-Lincoln or Pennsylvania State University. Nevertheless some features of the general continuing education and correspondence study programmes have been described in detail to further elucidate common features of the general American system. The nature, organization and functions of the University of Utah's Division of Continuing Education is a variation on a general theme, while the Correspondence Study operation is not unlike many of those listed in the NUCEA catalog and described in general terms in Markowitz's study.

The Office of Extended Learning Programs, California State University, Sacramento.

The Office of Extended Learning Programs at the California State University, Sacramento has much the same objectives and responsibilities as the continuing education and extension units at the other universities already discussed and is directed at a similar clientele:

> . . . Persons employed in government agencies, school districts, industries and other organizations, as well as those individuals considering new careers or seeking to expand their interests. In addition, a selection of courses is available to students choosing to accelerate their studies and fulfil graduation requirements. . . . [38]

On-and-off-campus programmes are offered for credit and non-credit as well as conferences, workshops and seminars, but independent or correspondence studies are not available. The University formerly had two large external degree programmes - Criminal Justice and Nursing - but the number of enrolments gradually declined and the programmes were eventually phased-out. At present a Consortium, which has an

[38] Expanding Horizons, California State University, Sacramento: Fall 1983 Extended Learning Programs Catalog, p.26.

office on campus, handles external degree programmes for the university system (22 campuses) as a whole. However, the Department of Civil Engineering apparently offers a series of credit/non-credit courses on water use and control by independent study. The NUCEA research paper indicated that the programme as a whole attracted 3,409 enrolments in 1981/82. Of these only 282 were studying for college credit though doubtless most of the others were seeking continuing education units (CEUs) for career purposes.

The Office of Extended Learning Programs is under the aegis of a Dean who is assisted by two Programmers. It has credit and non-credit programmes and offers courses which are either credit or non-credit and many that can be taken as credit or as non-credit units. Up to 24 units of a baccalaureate degree programme may be earned in the Extended Learning Program, but generally the credit stream consists of Certificate Programs designed to supplement degrees already held and may be used with appropriate approval to earn credit towards graduate programmes.

There are five Certificate Programs: Computer Science, Tourism, Chemical Dependency Studies, Public Management and Management. The Computer Science Certificate is jointly sponsored by the Association for Computer Sciences and California State University, Sacramento. Tourism is California's major industry so that a certificate in this field is seen as a valuable service to the State. The Chemical Dependency Studies programme was originally designed for para-professionals dealing with alcoholics, but has been expanded to include drug dependency in general. The Certificate in Public Management was developed primarily for Federal, State and County personnel and the classes are held in downtown Sacramento locations during lunch hours. Finally, the Certificate of Management has been approved by the American Management Association and is offered jointly by the American Management Association Extension Institute and California State University, Sacramento. Computer Science, Tourism and Chemical Dependency Studies are the

three largest programmes.

The non-credit programmes cover three main areas. Languages for the traveller include courses in Italian, French, German, Spanish, Cantonese, Japanese, Persian, etc. Travel study programmes have involved tours of locations as diverse as France, Germany, Italy, England, Austria, Japan, China, Australia and similar countries, but also includes 'mini tours', supplemented by slide programmes, of San Francisco, Death Valley, Monterey and other local areas. The 'fun' class of courses includes such subjects as the 'ABC of Trout Fishing', Art, Health Maintenance, Geology, Archaeology and so on. However, there are a wide range of credit/non-credit courses on such subjects as Anthropology, Art, Business, Computers, Finance, Education, Engineering, Fashion, Foreign Languages, the Humanities, Nursing, and Psychology. Continuing education units can be earned in many of these courses as well as college credits.

Classes are open to all high school graduates, college students and adults and formal admission to the University is not required, though students must satisfy the prerequisite requirements of the courses. However, entry to the programme does not constitute admission to the University. Those seeking to enter a regular college programme must therefore secure formal admission. Despite the relatively open entry, faculty are required to ensure that the academic standards of performance and class contact hours of Extending Learning credit courses are equivalent to those prescribed for regular classes and that the same grading system is employed.

The California State University, Sacramento's Extended Learning Program is similar in its essential features to those of the other institutions visited with the independent study option left out and with less emphasis on modern educational technology, such as television, radio and telephonic communication and more reliance on the other service sections of the University. Although it caters for non-typical students it uses traditional face-to-face methods to teach them.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is a common practice in the United States to establish a division or college of continuing education or extension to take responsibility for all non-typical and non-traditional aspects of university instruction, that is, for all teaching which does not directly involve full-time, day students. The responsibilities of these continuing education or extension units usually include the organization of evening classes, extension classes and independent and correspondence studies for part-time students and in, some cases, also for full-time students, the development and presentation of media courses and the arrangement of conferences, seminars, workshops and field trips. Such units represent a rational response to community demands for non-traditional and life-long forms of education. Their rapid and continuing growth is indicative both of the changing educational needs of society and of their success in meeting them.

2. The University of Queensland has been involved in two of the major fields of non-traditional university education since its foundation in 1910, namely, the provision of part-time evening classes and external studies. However, apart from the work of the Institute of Modern Languages, it has tended to ignore, at least in a formal sense, other aspects of continuing education. The establishment of the School of External Studies and Continuing Education represents an attempt to remedy this neglect. In the light of experience in the United States this initiative appears to be soundly based on educational need and proven administrative principles, but given the different lines of continuing educational development in Australia and the U.S.A. there is not a strong case for creating an over-arching body to provide non-typical and non-traditional forms of university education of the kind which is common in North America. There is, however, an urgent need to strengthen the administrative structures of the School of External Studies and Continuing Education so that it can carry out its functions more effectively. In particular, the School should be under the

aegis of a Pro Vice-Chancellor with the level of administrative support required to quickly develop the University's continuing education programme.

3. In most cases these Divisions of Continuing Education and University Extension offer four categories of courses on- and off-campus:

1. college level credit courses;
2. non-credit courses of university quality;
3. college level courses which can be taken for either credit or non-credit; and
4. high school credit courses.

There is no need for the University of Queensland to become involved in high school education as other institutions have this responsibility, but its initiative in the development of a range of non-credit courses should be rapidly expanded. The obvious way to do this, and one which is already being explored by the Coordinator of Continuing Education, is to offer 'credit' subjects also as non-credit courses. If this were done the range of non-credit offerings could be quickly expanded without incurring the high costs of developing courses from scratch. Clearly some additional costs would be incurred but these would be more than covered by the fees charged to non-degree students.

4. In this context the definition of a non-credit course is important since it will be necessary to distinguish clearly between those students taking courses for credit and those studying them on a non-credit basis. At some American universities this is done simply by requiring students to specify whether they are taking the course for credit or non-credit, for example, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. At others, for example, Athabasca University, students are required to notify the university at a specific stage of the course whether they are auditing the course, taking it for credit, or studying it on a non-credit basis. Another group of institutions differentiate between credit and

non-credit courses with the same curriculum by setting different assessment requirements. For example, the University of California does not require non-credit students to sit the final examination. The problem of definition is particularly important if, as is the case at most of the American universities I visited, non-credit students can enrol without meeting the institutional admission requirements, or being admitted to a degree programme. Usually non-credit students are not permitted to change their enrolment status to credit after a certain stage in the course.

5. It is important that the practice of auditing a course is clearly differentiated from enrolment in a course on a non-credit basis. Auditing may be used as a device, as it is at Athabasca University, to enable students to more effectively choose the course or courses of most interest or value to them. Generally it is a convenient way for people to acquire some knowledge of areas of interest without being admitted to the institution or being subjected to the normal assessment procedures of the course. Non-credit courses, on the other hand, are normally taken by people to enhance their career opportunities, to acquire new skills, or to attain personal educational goals. Non-credit students are therefore likely to seek some official recognition of their academic achievements, such as a letter certifying that they have satisfactorily completed the course, or the more formal award of Continuing Education Units. In the latter case ten continuing education credit hours constitute one C. E. U. in the U. S. A. By contrast no credit is given for auditing a course, though students are required to register and to pay an appropriate fee. In some cases this is the same as that for students registered for credit. Usually the permission of the faculty member teaching a course is required by an `auditor' and the number of auditors is limited by the places available in the class. Obviously the practice of selling independent study materials to non-registered persons is analogous to auditing a face-to-face class.

6. I would recommend that procedures be developed for the registration of auditors and non-credit students in regular university courses and that an appropriate

level of fees be set. The auditing of external studies courses could be introduced by selling the course materials. If non-credit students were enrolled without being admitted to the University strict regulations would be required to prevent subsequent claims for credit being successful. One possibility would be to have different assessment requirements for credit and non-credit students. At the universities I visited such an approach does not seem to have been favoured: most required non-credit students to 'complete' the course in the same manner as credit students. However, invariably the student was required either at the time of enrolment or at a specific stage of the course to indicate whether he/she was taking the course for credit or non-credit.

7. There is, however, a need to provide some form of recognition for non-credit study. I recommend that immediate steps be taken to establish procedures for issuing letters of completion and, more importantly, that a system of continuing education unit credits be established with a view to encouraging professional recognition of non-credit qualifications.

8. In particular, there are sound reasons for introducing a series of continuing education certificate programmes tailored especially to provide qualifications for professional groups. Most of the universities I visited had such programmes. For example, University of California Extension offered certificates in business, management and industrial relations: the University of Florida in insurance: the University of Minnesota in fire protection, general studies, liberal arts, mathematics and science, accounting, business administration, credit and financial management, human services, industrial relations, management of administrative services and undergraduate development: the University of Wisconsin in general studies and business management (independent study), behavioral science, management and others: the University of Utah in textiles, management, real estate, public administration and criminology: and the California State University, Sacramento, in

chemical dependency studies, computer science, public management, tourism, management and practical sales skills and negotiation for business. Athabasca University was developing certificate programmes in administration and labour studies. As this is not a complete list for the universities visited it is obvious that certificate courses are an important aspect of continuing education programmes in North America. The programmes are sometimes a judicious mixture of credit and non-credit courses. Usually credits gained in this form cannot be transferred to degree programmes. I would suggest that the precedent should be followed at the University of Queensland.

9. The level of fees to be charged for auditing courses or for non-credit enrolment will need careful attention. At the California State University, Sacramento, the fee for auditing is the same as for non-credit enrolment. At other institutions it is less. Because tertiary education is 'free' in Australia comparisons with North America can be misleading as fees for baccalaureate degree programmes in U.S.A. can be as much as $8,000 per anum for those in the humanities and social sciences and $13,000 for programmes like medicine. Nevertheless some American fees for non-credit courses may provide a useful yardstick. According to Markowitz the mean course fees for college level independent study courses in 1981-82 was $31.94 per semester hour. For individual non-credit courses it can be as low as $10 and as high as $400 depending on the nature of the course and, one suspects, on the ability of prospective students to pay. For example, at California State University, Sacramento, the standard charge for a certificate course was $130 for levels I and II and $160 for level III plus a records fee of $3. Fees were generally around $80 for non-credit courses at the University of Utah and for credit/non-credit courses ranged upward at $20 increments from $100 for one hour to $1,407 for 25 credits. At the University of Nebraska-Lincoln credit/non-credit course fees cost $38.50 per credit hour, a normal course fee was about $115. Credit courses at the University of Wisconsin

ranged between $60 and $80. Continuing education courses generally were less than this. In setting fees the University of Queensland should ensure that real costs are covered and that there will be a profit. In the calculation of fees the costs of administration and maintenance ought to be included on the debit side.

10. The question of remuneration for staff involved in teaching continuing education courses is, perhaps, more difficult to resolve simply. Since part-time evening and external studies teaching is already part of departmental teaching loads there is no reason to specifically remunerate staff taking auditors and non-credit students into their normal day and evening classes though they ought to be consulted in the matter. Net revenue from such students might therefore be logically divided between the Continuing Education Unit of the School of External Studies and Continuing Education and the relevant academic department which provides the 'teaching'. However, if academic staff are required to prepare entirely new non-credit courses for the continuing education programme consideration might be given to paying them a stipend on an 'overload' basis for developing the course and teaching it. Since this kind of teaching does not come within the province of government funding perhaps the assignments could be marked on a piece-time basis as is done in the United States and used to be done in the Division of External Studies. The other alternative would be to pay, the departments for providing the services needed: allowing them to use the funds for course development and teaching to employ more staff as required. The level of payments for these services is a more difficult matter, but clearly those quoted by Markowitz are based on American teaching practices which are textbook oriented and appear too low for Australian conditions. The University of Utah course development stipend of $3,000 might be closer to the mark for courses closely related to normal university 'credit' subjects. Remuneration for the development of completely new courses would need to be higher.

11. The University of Queensland is already offering credit subjects to part-time evening and external students. Consideration might also be given to offering extension credit and non-credit classes at locations such as Redcliffe, Ipswich, Nambour, Southport and possibly also Toowoomba on the United States model. Given the huge size of Metropolitan Brisbane there is also some merit in offering extension classes in some of the distant suburbs: especially in those disciplines which are unable or unwilling to offer courses through external study. There seems to be some valid reasons in these circumstances to take courses to students instead of expecting the students always to come to the University. But perhaps the alternative of widening the external studies offerings and relaxing the restrictions on metropolitan external studies enrolment is a more logical way of dealing with the problems of University accessibility. However, the California State University, Sacramento's practice of conducting public management classes in the city centre at lunch hour might warrant imitation in such fields as public administration, business management and commerce.

12. In some instances college credit courses are offered for the graduate as well as undergraduate degrees programmes, but generally residence periods are obligatory either in the form of attendance at on-campus classes for a significant portion of degree credits or of intensive seminars during the currency of the course. In short, even the methodology of non-traditional education has been legitimized by periods of traditional face-to-face teaching. Nevertheless, given the diversity of tertiary educational practice in North America there are exceptions to this general trend such as college credits and degrees through examination, or the distance education programme of Athabasca University.

13. Generally independent or correspondence study departments are part of the larger divisions or colleges of continuing education and/or extension within university structures and in the majority of cases their main function is to supplement traditional

on-campus teaching. Few of the independent study programmes are seen as a completely satisfactory alternative to traditional on-campus education. Apart from the rather special cases of independent study at the University of Oklahoma, Syracuse University and Athabasca University faculty regulations or a lack of appropriate courses at the universities I visited prevent the independent or correspondence student from completing a degree by this mode of study. In this respect the conservative bent of American academics is more pronounced than in Australia where some universities have, albeit sometimes reluctantly, accepted the logic and the educational propriety of offering complete degree programmes through external study. It is informative to learn that even Athabasca academics complain that the quality and value of their educational achievements have not been recognised by Academia.

14. The Liberal studies, independent study programmes of the University of Oklahoma and Syracuse University deserve further investigation. These external degree programmes at the undergraduate and graduate level are based on the assumption that a broader, more general degree programme is required if the educational and career needs of adults are to be met adequately. It is further assumed that more responsibility for his/her own learning can be placed on the adult student and that courses therefore do not have to be as formally structured as those designed for school leavers. Moreover, it is concluded that a more holistic approach to learning involving inter-disciplinary study is desirable. The external degree programmes at both universities reflect these assumptions, but clearly the liberal studies baccalaureate and masters degrees at the University of Oklahoma indicate a much greater willingness to introduce radical, innovatory programmes to meet the perceived needs of mature students.

15. Since the University of Queensland has been offering a limited number of traditional baccalaureate degree programmes to external students since its foundation in 1910 there seems to be little prospect of developing a more general external liberal

studies programme at this time. However, attention might well be given to the possibility of developing an external studies, inter-disciplinary masters degree in the social sciences on either the Oklahoma or Syracuse models. Some negotiations have already taken place on a proposal of this kind, but I have been informed that no positive result has yet been achieved. It has always seemed to me that inter-disciplinary studies are more appropriate at the post-graduate than at the undergraduate level. In this respect the Oklahoma masters degree model is particularly attractive since it combines directed study with intensive seminars and the preparation of a substantial thesis. More generally, the baccalaureate liberal studies programmes appear to be a much more attractive approach to inter-disciplinary studies than the general studies proposals considered by this university several years ago. Perhaps an Australian studies major within the Arts degree could be designed along similar lines with discipline studies on Australia leading to an advanced inter-disciplinary 20 credit point subject based on extensive reading and intensive seminars.

16. With the exception of Athabasca University, which is a distance education institution, the independent or correspondence studies departments within the continuing education divisions visited were essentially administrative entities which organized and managed their programmes using staff from within the normal university departments, schools and colleges to develop and `teach' the courses on an overload basis. In one or two cases the independent study department employed a few academics to do some teaching and to give advice on course development (e.g. the University of Wisconsin), but this is unusual. In my view independent or external students cannot be taught effectively on an overload basis. The practice in itself is evidence of the low regard in which independent, indeed all part-time, study is often held in American universities. It is seen as an odd-time activity which academics can fit in between their normal full-time teaching and research work. This is not to say that some faculty involved in independent studies or correspondence teaching do not throw

themselves into the work with enthusiasm, but it is to admit that such a marginal activity is unlikely to command the time, interest and application it deserves from the majority of those engaged in it, especially when many of their colleagues tend not to see it as a 'proper' university function.

17. I strongly recommend that the North American practice of arranging for course development to be done by faculty under contract or on an overload basis be avoided if at all possible. Its introduction would inevitably make external teaching a marginal activity and confirm the views held by many academics that it is not a proper function of the University. The University has a traditional commitment to external studies which should be evident in the centrality of external teaching to its major educational activities. Part-time evening and external teaching must continue to be regarded as important and as deserving of the same attention and resources as full-time, day teaching. As the academic functions of the Division of External Studies are integrated into the discipline departments care must be taken to ensure that external teaching is not neglected or subordinated to a secondary place in the teaching priorities of departments. It would, indeed, be a tragedy if resources attracted by external student numbers were used to up-grade the quality of teaching offered to on-campus day students, while external teaching was neglected.

18. The tying of independent study courses closely to a textbook appears to be a reflection of the approach adopted towards undergraduate teaching at a large number of American universities except that the 'lectures' are left out. The study guides merely give a brief introduction to each lesson and set appropriate assignments. They do not pretend to give independent students a written equivalent of the face-to-face lectures that on-campus students receive. In this respect they constitute university education "on the cheap" and deserve to be seen as inferior. They differ from most of the external studies courses at this University in two ways. Firstly, in most cases humanities and social science subjects offered by the Division of External Studies are

not tied closely to textbooks, but are also based on the much wider reading materials available in Thatcher Library. Secondly, an attempt is generally made to provide instructional materials which serve much the same purposes as lectures and tutorials do in face-to-face teaching. Admittedly additional reading is sometimes set in some American independent study courses, but is usually supplementary in nature and not of central importance to the course. Given these differences in orientation and teaching practice American methods of independent study should not be imitated. If on-campus students need lectures and tutorials surely 'distance' students deserve course materials which provide a similar level of tuition.

19. Despite the supplementary role of independent studies in the teaching activities of many American universities and the marginal nature of their commitment to it there is a realization that a different teaching methodology is involved. Consequently in almost every case standard procedures are followed in the development and presentation of courses which are based on learning theory. Although the standardization of course materials is often left to editorial staff a number of universities employ instructional developers to advise academic staff (the subject experts) on course development and design. Each course is divided into lessons according to its size and nature which incorporates an assignment or self-testing exercise. Sometimes supplementary reading lists are associated with the lesson. There is generally a final examination and often a mid-course test as well. The high costs of 'glossy' production are avoided, and a simple, effective presentation of course materials is sought. It is not difficult to find some interesting parallels to the procedures followed in the Division of External Studies. However, American methods are inevitably more formalized because of the more peripheral involvement of academic staff in the teaching process. For example, there is a heavy reliance on editors in preparing materials for printing and often also in shaping their general structure.

20. Of the institutions visited Athabasca University provided the most outstanding example of the systematic development of courses. In theory course design and development is the responsibility of course teams consisting of a subject matter expert, an instructional developer, a visual designer and an editor with a course co-ordinator to oversee the process. In practice the course team approach has been modified. As staff have learned the theory and techniques of distance education the subject matter experts and the course co-ordinators do not need the advice of instructional developers to the same extent and editors have assumed some of the responsibilities of the instructional developers. In any case course development and production has tended to become a linear process with the various 'experts' contributing at the appropriate stage in the process. Not surprisingly staff speak of the 'myth' of the course team.

21. The Division of External Studies is already implementing a policy of establishing a course development unit to improve external teaching. While the remarks concerning the myth of the course team should be taken seriously there is a strong case for strengthening the course development unit. Doubtless the course materials of experienced external studies lecturers could be improved significantly through the advice of professional course developers, graphic designers and editors. More importantly, the services of personnel of these kinds will be crucial to the successful integration of the academic aspects of external studies into the discipline departments. In my view the new arrangements will only work well if lecturers involved in external teaching are periodically seconded to the School of External Studies and Continuing Education to work with experts in the design and development of new courses and the revision of existing courses. There is need, in particular, for more course development advisors, graphic designers and editors if our course materials are to meet modern standards of distance education pedagogy and course presentation.

22. There is also a sound case for appointing course co-ordinators to assume overall responsibility for the smooth and effective running of courses on the Athabasca model, especially as external studies academic staff are `integrated' into the discipline departments. Perhaps such persons could be involved in course development in their discipline, but I see their role as supervising the delivery of courses in the discipline areas and of liasing with the academic staff responsible for external teaching within the discipline. It seems desirable to locate the co-ordinators within the School of External Studies and Continuing Education and to make them responsible to the Director for their co-ordinating role while still being answerable to the Head of the discipline department in purely academic matters. Theirs would be a difficult role, but one that will be crucial to the smooth and effective operation of external studies under the proposed system of academic integration. Clearly they would need to have considerable academic standing and be invested with the authority required to carry out that role under the joint oversight of the Director and Head of the relevant department.

23. Obviously tutoring is given much more emphasis in the Athabasca University's method of distance education than in the procedures followed at the University of Queensland, though it is gratifying that our system of `local' tutorials is now being imitated. The practice of appointing a `personal' tutor for each student who is readily available by telephone cost free has, on the face of it, much to recommend it. But it seems to be unrealistic in the present context to recommend the introduction of such a system. Perhaps the most that can be achieved in the foreseeable future is to permit students to telephone their lecturer(s) toll free as the need arises and to encourage, if not to require, lecturers or tutors to telephone their students in accordance with a pre-arranged schedule. Budgetary considerations could be imposed by limiting the number of toll free calls a student may make and by framing the lecturers' telephone schedules in line with Budgetary allocations. Certainly there are

compelling reasons for using teleconferencing as an important supplementary method of teaching courses which require a more personalized and immediate method of interacting with students than printed and audio-visual materials provide. Of course the wider use of the telephone will obviously place greater workloads on academics which must be taken into consideration when fixing staffing levels and this implies higher external teaching costs.

24. Consideration might also be given to the possibility of developing reading, and even lecture, courses for individuals or special groups of students. Some of the postgraduate subjects are essentially reading courses, but, perhaps, more advanced undergraduate subjects might also be taught in this manner with provision being made for scheduled, telephone tutorials at appropriate stages in the course and compulsory study schools. Classroom lecture courses could also be arranged, as already suggested, at locations within reasonable driving distance of Brisbane on a limited extended campus model so that additional subjects would be available at these centres. Despite the high costs there should also be some experimental media courses so that the viability of these kinds of educational technology can be tested and staff given an opportunity to develop the skills needed to use them. Unfortunately television and radio `time' is at present too expensive to permit the widespread use of these media for teaching purposes, but the introduction of satellites may reduce costs sufficiently to permit the development of a carefully chosen series of media courses. However, American experience does not suggest that students are overly impressed by the effectiveness of media instruction, preferring the more flexible print forms of course presentation.

25. In the meantime experimental projects in the production of video-tapes and the innovative use of audio-tapes might be encouraged so that basic experience in the use of television and radio teaching techniques is gained by teaching staff. In particular, the Telidon system of distance teaching should be investigated. Once

again cost will be a limiting factor in mounting useful experiments of these kinds. Such projects are also likely to be expensive of staff time and, at a period when greater emphasis is being placed on research, few of the energetic, innovating members of the academic staff may be prepared to devote the time required to initiate such experiments and to bring them to fruition. Judicious use of the secondment system may overcome some of the difficulties.

26. Much has already been accomplished in up-grading the production segment of our external studies operation, especially in the print section. However, facilities for the production of audio-visual materials need to be up-graded urgently if teaching staff are to have opportunities to work effectively with this class of study materials.

27. During the last three years positive steps have been taken to co-ordinate and expand continuing education at the University of Queensland. It would appear from my limited observations in North America that these initiatives are sound and in accord with international experience. Much can still, however, be learned from American experience in this field of university education. Similarly, the developments in external studies are soundly based on the experience of kindred institutions elsewhere. However, in view of the policy of academic integration into the discipline departments there is some urgency to expand the support services within the school to ensure that the effectiveness of external teaching does not decline, rather than increase.